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THE BACHELOR'S CHRISTMAS.

By Robert Grant.

THOMAS WIGGIN, or Tom Wiggin, as everyone called him, sat alone in his bachelor quarters on Christmas-eve waiting for a carriage. The carriage was not late, but Tom, who was a methodical man in everything he did, had finished his preparations a little sooner than need be. His fur coat and hat and gloves lay on a chair beside him, ready to put on the moment Bridget, the maid, should knock at the door and tell him that Perkins, the cabby at the corner, was blocking the way. Tom had already taken out of his pocket two ten-dollar gold pieces and laid them on the centre-table beside an array of packages done up with marvellous care in the whitest of paper and the reddest of ribbon. One of the gold pieces was for Bridget and the other for Perkins. Twice the sum would not have replaced the crockery and objects of virtu which the Hibernian handmaiden, who brought up his breakfast and was supposed to keep his room tidy, had smashed since he had tipped her last; and Tom had, only two months before, undergone the melancholy experience of falling through the bottom of Perkins's coupé, because of the pertinacity with which that common carrier of passengers clung to the delusion that no repairs to a vehicle were necessary until it dropped to pieces. But as Tom would have said if interrogated on the subject by a subtler mind, Christmas comes but once a year, and though Bridget's best was her worst, she had tried to do it, and Perkins, shiftless as he was, had driven his poor old nag one day into a pink lather in endeavoring to catch a train for him, which he had just missed after all.

Besides, Tom had had a remarkably good business year, so that a ten-dollar gold piece did not seem to him the dazzlingly large sum he had regarded it ten years earlier. He had lived in these same bachelor lodgings for ten years, and during that time had built up a very neat business by his own unaided effort, as his contemporaries (and contemporaries are apt to be stern critics) were ready to admit. He had worked hard and steadily, taking only enough vacation to enable him to keep well, and shunting everything to the background which threatened to interfere with the object he had in view—that is, everything but one thing. And this one thing he had made up his mind five years ago was out of the question. Consequently he had shunted it to the background with everything else, and devoted himself more unreservedly than ever to the real estate business.

Ten years is quite a piece out of any man's life, and though Tom Wiggin was the picture of health, he [illegible]s, as we say colloquially, no longer [illegible]icken. He was stouter than he had [illegible]n and had lost some of his hair, which gave him rather a middle-aged appearance, or at least suggested that he never would see

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thirty-five again. When he had taken his present room he had been a slim and almost delicate-looking stripling without a copper whom any girl might be likely to fancy. To-day, in his own estimation and in that of his friends and acquaintances, he was a well-seasoned old bachelor who was not likely to ask any one feminine to share his comfortable competency.

Christmas comes but once a year, and Tom had for several years past been in the habit of recognizing the fact in his special way. He was extensively an uncle. That is to say, he had two married sisters, one with five and the other with three children of tender age, and each of his two married brothers had presented him with a nephew and niece of the name of Wiggin. Categorically speaking, he had seven nephews and five nieces to provide with Christmas gifts, not to mention his two sisters and his two sisters-in-law, all of whom had grown accustomed to expect a package in white paper tied with pink ribbon and marked "with love and a merry Christmas from Tom." Here were sixteen presents to begin with, and there were apt to be almost as many more. On this particular Christmas evening there were thirty-five parcels in all, each done up with immaculate care, for Tom, like most old bachelors, prided himself on doing everything in a thorough, deliberate fashion. He had made his last purchase a fortnight ago, and had spent two entire evenings in putting the array of toys and fancy goods in presentable order. They were of all sorts and sizes, for Tom had paled neither before bulk nor price. There was a safety bicycle for a nephew who had set his heart on one, and the tiniest of gold watches for his eldest niece. There was a warm fur-lined cloak for his dead mother's oldest friend, a spinster lady who had small means wherewith to keep herself comfortable in a cold world, and a case of marvellous port for his old chum, Belden, who would see that it was not wasted on unappreciative palates. Everything was ready for the summons from Perkins, the cabby, and Tom, bald-headed bachelor that he was, was fuming a little in spite of the fact that it still lacked three minutes of the hour appointed for departure.

Alone in his bachelor quarters on Christmas-eve.—Page 663.

The clock in the neighboring church tower, whose tones were plainly audible in the sky parlors which he called his home, had only just struck five when the tramp of feet followed by a knock announced the joint arrival of Bridget

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and Perkins, to whom he had intrusted the duty of helping him to carry his precious parcels down three flights of stairs to the attendant cab. This was certain it was genuine; then Bridget, taxing her intelligence for a suitable expression for the wealth of feeling at her heart, exclaimed:

The wreaths of holly were the nearest semblance to faces, and they seemed almost to grin at him.—Page 670.

the sixth consecutive year which Bridget and Perkins had done the same thing, and they thought they knew what to expect. But they had counted without their host. A year ago they had chuckled for forty-eight hours over a five-dollar bill apiece. Now, when they opened the door and presented their grinning countenances, their benefactor, after shouting at them a merry Christmas, proceeded to daze their intellects, of every particle of which they stood in sore need for the purpose of a safe descent, by tossing to each of them a gold coin of twice the denomination. For some moments they stood in bewildered, sheepish silence examining their treasure, as though to make

"And sure, Mr. Wiggin, it's Bridget Lanagan that's hoping that before the good Lord brings anither Christmas-day the proudest lady in the land will be yer wife. It's me and Perkins would be the first to say God bless her, though we lost a good job by it." At this prodigal outburst of expectation Tom Wiggin's countenance grew rosy-red, notwithstanding the incredulous laugh with which he received the blessing of his warm-hearted handmaiden and the nods of the less nimble-witted cab-man. Then a shadow crossed it as though of unhappy recollection, and there was a tinge of real hopelessness in his half-jocular protestation.

"Many thanks, Bridget, for your

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good wishes, but there's no such luck in store for me. I shall live and die an old bachelor such as you see me now, and you and Perkins will be able to count on a ten-dollar gold piece on Christmas-eve for the rest of your lives. That is," Tom added by way of timely warning, "provided you don't smash any of these things of mine in carrying them downstairs. You remember that the pair of you last year between you broke a teacup worth its weight in gold, and the year before that large vase broke itself. If everything were to go down safely I should almost begin to believe that what Bridget hopes might come true. Careful now, and be sure not to lay that bicycle right on top of the gilt-edged dinner-plates for my sister Mary."

Whether it was that Tom's strictures in regard to the clumsiness of his assistants were exaggerated, or they were bent upon causing him to repose trust in Bridget's prophecy, the thirty-five packages reached the cab and were stowed within and without, under their owner's supervising eye, without a single casualty.

"Faith, Mr. Wiggin, they'll be taking yer this time for Santa Claus, sure," said Perkins when the last precious parcel had been deposited. "Yer'll have to ride outside, sir, as yer did last year."

Evidently the gaping file of small boys which had formed itself on each side of the doorway was of the opinion that, if the gentleman in the fur coat was not Santa Claus, he was one of his blood-relations, for, as Tom climbed carefully to his post beside Perkins so as not to hazard the safety of the bicycle and the box of port, for which there was no room inside, they broke out into a shrill hurrah. Perhaps they too, or at least some of them, knew what they had to expect, for before Santa Claus seated himself on the box he plunged his hands into the side pockets of his fur overcoat, and then reproducing them, seemed to toss them high to the winds, as he cried, with gay good-will:

"Scramble now, you little devils, scramble, and wish you merry Christmas!"

What Tom flung to the winds was neither his fingers nor his thumbs, but a plethora of bright nickels which he had drawn from the bank for the express purpose. As the glittering shower of brand-new five-cent pieces fell to the icy sidewalk, the band of urchins threw themselves upon it with a shout of transport which drew tears from the eyes of the tender-hearted Bridget, who had remained to witness this established ceremony, and ought to have warmed the cockles of the donor's heart, if indeed they needed warming. Twice again he replunged his hands into his pockets and twice again the yell was repeated. Then seating himself beside Perkins, Tom gave the signal for departure, and as the cab rounded the corner a score of little lungs gave him back his merry Christmas with all their might.

It was a genuine Christmas-eve. The ground was covered with snow and the sleigh-bells were jangling merrily. The lamps were already lighted and many a parlor window gave out the reflection of wreaths of holly, and now and again sparkled with little rows of candles in token of the precious Christmas anniversary. Perkins's coupé was on wheels, and his equine paradox was imperfectly caulked into the bargain, so that the world seemed to be rushing by them as they jogged along. Tom had a list which he from time to time consulted by the allied light of the moon and the street-lamps, in order to see that his itinerary was accurately followed and no one forgotten. At every house he dismounted in person and handed in his present. When he reached the residence of his sister, Mary Ferris, who was the mother of the five children, he had to make four trips up and down the door-steps. His sister, who was listening, recognized his voice and came into the vestibule to meet him, and her children, bounding in her wake like an elated pack of wolves, shouted with one tongue,

"Hurrah! it's Uncle Tom."

Mrs. Ferris sent them scampering upstairs in double-quick time on pain of dire penalties if they peeped or listened, and fondly drew her brother into the small sitting-room which opened out of the hall.

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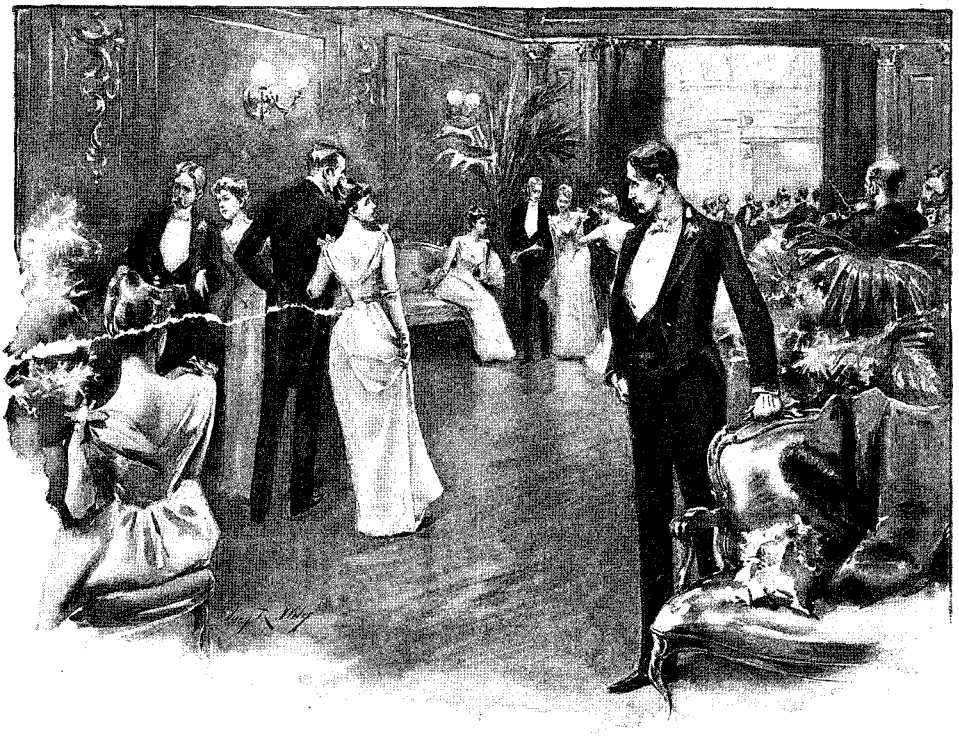

One of those icy glances which made him yearn to cut his throat.—Page 672.

"I can't stop, Mary," he said, "I'm on my annual circuit. Now let's see if I've got everything. Here's the bicycle for Roger, junior. They call it 'a safety,' and I trust it may prove so. And the Noah's ark, the largest one made, for Harry; and a musical box, which plays eight tunes, for Dorothy; and a doll which sings 'Ta-ra-boom-de-ay' for little Mary; and a woolly lamb for baby Ned. And here's a trifle in the crockery line for you, my dear. If you don't like the pattern you can change them. Now I must be off. How's Roger, senior? Give him my love and a merry Christmas."

"He'll be at home very soon, Tom, and dreadfully sorry to have missed you. The children are just crazy about their stockings, and little Roger had given up all hope of a bicycle. You are too generous to them and to all of us. And, oh, Tom," she added, laying her hand npon his arm, "I feel dreadfully that we shan't have you with us at dinner to-morrow, but old Mr. Ferris depends on Roger and me for Christmas. He says it may be the last time, and that Christmas is the Ferris day. Thanksgiving is the Wiggin day, you know, and we did have a jolly time then; yet I just hate to think of your not dining with one of us on Christmas. How can it be helped, though, if all the things-in-law have family parties?"

"Why, that's all right, Mary. As you say, Thanksgiving is the Wiggin day, and things-in-law have rights, as well as those they marry. Merry Christmas, dearest, and let me go, or I shall never get through my list."

"Ah, but, Tom love, I do wish you were married," she cried, putting her arms around his neck to detain him. She was his favorite sister, and free to introduce dangerous topics with due discretion. "You would be so much happier."

"Do I seem so miserable?" he inquired, as he looked down at her and stroked her hair. "That's an old story, Mary. I've heard you express the same wish every six months for the last ten years. Every family should have one

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DRAWN BY IRVING R. WILES.

"Come in, George, don't be afraid," said Tom. "They won't bite."—Page 676.

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old bachelor, at least, and I shall be ours."

She was silent for an instant. "Do you ever see Isabelle Hardy, nowadays?" she asked, with brave insistence. "I have sometimes thought"—she stopped, deterred from completing her sentence by the shadow which had come over Tom's face.

He gently, but firmly, removed his sister's arms from his neck, and answered gravely, almost stiffly, "Very rarely indeed." Then, with a fresh access of gayety, as though he were resolved that nothing foreign to the occasion should mar its spirit, he cried lustily, "A merry Christmas to you, Mary!" and departed.

Continuing steadily on his round, Tom delivered safely the case of port, and the fur-lined cloak, and brought up in the next street, in front of his brother Joe's house. Here he was to leave the gold watch for his eldest niece, a generous box of bonbons for his sister-in-law, a tool-chest for young Joe, and a first edition of "Vanity Fair" for Joe himself, who, though not particularly well off, was a rabid book collector. Tom had dogged an auctioneer for two days to make sure of obtaining the volume in question, which, so far as he could see, was like as two peas to the subsequent issues of the same book to be bought anywhere for a song. He was convinced of his mistake when he saw his brother's face light up at sight of the treasure-trove and heard his delighted inquiry, "Where on earth did you pick this up, Tom? You couldn't have given me anything I'd rather have."

"Glad you like it, Joe. If it isn't the real thing, I'll have the hide of that fellow, Nevins, who sold it to me."

"The real thing? It's a genuine first edition and a splendid specimen. It's adorable. I say, old fellow, it's an outrage that we're to dine with Julia's father to-morrow and leave you out in the cold. Another year I mean to strike and have a Wiggin Christmas dinner, Thanksgiving or no Thanksgiving. Mary and I were comparing notes yesterday and vowing it was an infernal shame."

"Now, it's all right as it is, Joe. I've just left Mary, and I understand perfectly. You've got enough to do to digest your father-in-law's mince pie and Madeira without having me on your stomach."

"A regular old-fashioned ten-course feed, where you sit down at seven and get up at half-past ten feeling like lead. Ugh! Where are you going to dine, Tom?"

"No matter. That's my secret. I shall have a good dinner, never you fear. I must be off now and deliver the rest of my goods."

"It's an outrage—an infernal outrage," growled Joe. "Before you go, old man," he said, hooking his arm into his brother's, and dragging him in the direction of the dining-room, "we'll have a drink. I put a pint of fizz on the ice this morning for your special benefit. It won't take two minutes to mix the cock-tail." Thereupon Joe gave the bell-handle a wrench, and directed that the bottle in the ice-chest should be brought up together with the cracked ice which he had ordered to be in readiness, and in a very short space of time the white-capped maid reappeared with a waiter laden with all the necessary ingredients for the delectable beverage in question. Joe carefully measured out some bitters, pop went the cork of the Perrier Jouet, and presently the brothers were looking at each other over two brimming glasses.

"Wish you merry Christmas, Joe."

"Wish you merry Christmas, Tom. And here's to *her*." Joe paused an instant before he drank to add, "It's a big mistake you're not married, Tom. All I can say is some girl is losing a first-class husband. I say here's to *her*."

Tom, who had waited at the words, raised his glass solemnly. "There is no her and there never will be," he said, with quiet decision. "Still, since you give the toast, Joe, I'll drink it. It's not poisonous," he added, with a wry smile—"so here's to *her*." He drained his glass and set it down on the waiter, then for an instant stood ruminantly with his back to the open fire. "The drink was better than the toast in my case, Joe. My her must have died in infancy."

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"Honest Injun, Tom?" asked Joe, as he gripped his brother's hand held out for a parting shake and looked into his face.

Tom's eyes quailed before the honest gaze. His lip quivered. "I'm an infernal liar, Joe, and you know it. But what's the use? She wouldn't have me, man—and there's no one else whom I want to have. So, merry Christmas, Joe, and God bless you and yours."

As he went out into the frosty night the clock in the hall struck half-past six. There were only five parcels left and the coupé was nearly empty. Tom opened the door and stepping inside, lay back wearily. Presently he picked up one of the parcels—it was a book apparently, from its shape—and laid it at his side. When Perkins drew up the next time, Tom gathered the remaining four and ran up the steps with them. They were for his sister Kitty and her little company, and he spent a few moments indoors to explain matters. When he reappeared he said to his conductor, "114 Farragut Place, and then to the Club."

Tom sat inside with the remaining package resting on his lap, nervously watching for the cab to stop. They halted presently before a spacious house, the old-fashioned aspect of which was heightened by the curved iron railing which ran along the flight of steps leading up to it. Just before the cab stopped, Tom had taken a note from his breast pocket, and after looking round him stealthily in the darkness, had kissed the envelope. Now he tucked it under the red ribbon of the remaining package and walking gravely up the steps, rang the bell. There was nothing in the envelope but his visiting card, on which he had written, "with best wishes for a merry Christmas." When the servant came to the door Tom said, "Will you please give this to Miss Isabelle Hardy." Then the door closed in his face and he went solemnly down the steps again. On reaching the now empty cab he glanced over his shoulder as though in hope of catching a face at the window, but every shade was down, and the wreaths of holly were the nearest semblance to faces, and they seemed almost to grin at him. And well they might. It was the fifth year in succession that he had gone through exactly this same pantomime. Tom heaved one deep sigh; then he straightened his shoulders and passed his hand across his eyes as though he were sweeping away an unprofitable vision.

"To the club," he repeated sturdily to Perkins. "And now," he said to himself, as he shrouded himself in his fur coat and put up his feet on the opposite cushion, "the question is how to make the best of a devilish poor outlook. I mean to have a merry Christmas somehow."

II.

Though it was dinner time, there were few men in the club when Tom entered it. Still there was a half-dozen familiar spirits lounging in the sitting-room, most melancholy among whom was Frazer Bell, a bachelor far gone in the forties, an epicure, but poor as a church mouse.

"Just the man," said Tom to himself, and he drew him aside.

"Will you dine with me to-night, Frazer?"

"Er—I have just ordered dinner, but——"

"Then I'll countermand it," interposed Tom blithely, by way of relieving his would-be guest from the quandary of accepting the invitation without loss of self-respect. "It's Christmas-eve and this is my outfit; I'm going in for as good a dinner as they can give us in honor of the occasion. I say, old man, will you do me the favor to order it? You know fifty times better than I what we ought to have to get the best."

Frazer Bell grinned melodiously. One could almost see his mouth water.

"I'll do it if you like," he said.

"I wish you would. And be sure to put down the finest there is, and to pick out something gilt-edged in the way of wine; something cobwebby and precious."

"I'll try," said Frazer, with another grin, and he ambled off in the direction of the office.

Tom went into the reading-room and picked up a magazine. Presently he

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passed his hands across his eyes again, for the wreaths in the windows of the house in Farragut Place were grinning at him still. He said to himself that he guessed he needed another drink, and pressed the electric button at his side.

"Ask Mr. Frazer Bell what he'll have and bring me a Martigny cocktail," he said to the servant. Then he shut his eyes and the grinning wreaths changed into a girl's face, a face which had haunted him day in and day out for seven years. He knew that he ought to brush that away also, but he could not bring himself to do it on Christmas-eve. He would give himself that little luxury at least, before he tried to obliterate it by talking gastronomy with Frazer Bell. Nearly seven years, verily, since he had seen her first! She was then a girl of nineteen, and he at the bottom of the real estate ladder without a dollar to his name, as it were. He had been crazy to marry her, and for two years he had followed her from ball-room to ball-room with a feverish assiduity which threatened to revolutionize his business habits and make light of his business principles. He was not the only one in love with her; there were half a dozen; but the one whose devotion he dreaded most was Charles Leverett Saunders, a handsome dashing beau, a scion of a rich and conspicuous house. He had watched her behavior toward his rival with the eye of a lynx, and as he compared the notes of one evening with the notes of the next he had felt that she was more gracious to Saunders than to him. And yet sometimes she was so sweet and kind to him. But then, again she would be cold and distant, almost icy, in short; on which occasions he had felt as though he would like to cut his throat. A half-dozen times he had made up his mind to offer himself to her and know his fate, but somehow his determination, which was so prodigious in other affairs, had failed him. So matters had gone for a year and a half, and he had seemed no nearer and no less near to the goal than ever. He had said to himself severely that this thing must not go on.

On December 31st, just five years ago, there was to be a famous ball, the crack party of the season. He had resolved that before the old year was out he would know his fate once and for all. Ten-dollar gold pieces did not grow for him then on every bush, but he ordered from the florist the handsomest bouquet of roses and violets which native horticultural talent could devise, and sent it to Miss Isabelle Hardy on the eve of the ball. She had promised to dance the German with him, and when he entered the ball-room his eyes saw no one until they rested on her. A frown had creased his brow, for she was on the arm of Charles Leverett Saunders, and was looking up into his face with a smile of happy excitement which had suggested to Tom that he was as far from her thoughts as the Emperor of Japan. What was more and worse, she carried three gorgeous bouquets, but his was not among them. Where was it? Had it not been sent? If so, he would ruin that florist's trade for ever and ever. Or had she left it at home on purpose?

He fought shy of her until the German and there was no longer an excuse for him to keep away. Almost at once she thanked him for his lovely flowers.

"But you have not brought them."

"No," she said, sweetly. "I was unable to—I," and she had paused in her embarrassment.

"There were so many, of course."

"No, it was not that, Mr. Wiggin, I assure you." But she had looked a little hurt at his gruff words. "I had a very good reason for not bringing them."

There had been a piteous look in the girl's eyes as she spoke, which he had often recalled since; but then he had thought of nothing but his anger and the slight which had been put upon him. He felt like asking why she had not left Charles Leverett Saunders's flowers at home instead of his. It was clear that she did not care for him, and it became clearer and clearer in the course of the evening; for after a while they had sat almost tongue-tied beside each other. He had tried his best not to be disagreeable, but in spite of himself cynical sentences had slipped from between his teeth in close succes-

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sion. He had seen that she was hurt and he had rather gloried in it, and presently an embarrassed silence had followed, broken by the arrival of his rival with a magnificent favor which he proffered beamingly to the girl of Tom's heart. She had sailed away, and looking back over her shoulder, given Tom one glance—one of those icy glances which made him yearn to cut his throat. That was bad enough, but to crown all, when her turn came to bestow a boutonnière she made Tom carry her straight up to Leverett Saunders, in the buttonhole of whose coat she proceeded to fasten the rosebud for which Tom would have given twelve months of his life.

Five years ago on the first of January! He had gone home that night certain that Isabelle Hardy did not love him, and resolved that she should play fast and loose with him no longer. In the first hours of the new year he vowed that he would forget her, and devote himself to his business heart and soul. Henceforth he would close eye and brain to all distractions. He would cease forever to be a plaything for a woman's caprice.

He had kept his word. That is to say, his attentions had ended from that hour. The festivities which had known him knew him no more. He went nowhere, and the reason whispered under the rose was that Isabelle Hardy had given him the mitten. The whispers reached him, but little he cared that rumor was not strictly accurate. Was it not practically so? She had to all intents and purposes thrown him over, and he had stamped her image from his heart and gone on with his business, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Occasionally he passed her in the street, and on every Christmas-eve since the night of his resolution, he had left a trifling remembrance at the house in Farragut Place, just, as it were, to show that there was no ill feeling. Otherwise they never met, and here he was to-day, an old bachelor close on the confines of forty, getting bald and set in his ways, with a splendid business and a secret ache at his heart. And she? Tom had never known why she had not married Charles Leverett Saunders, as everybody expected and said she was going to do. Yet suddenly, without warning, that dashing gallant had gone abroad and had remained there ever since, doing the Nile, and Norway, and hunting tigers in the jungles of India, according as the humor seized him. And she? She was beginning to show just a little the traces of time, to suggest what she would look like if she never married and remained after all an old maid. He had been struck by it the last time he had passed her in the street. An old maid! Isabelle Hardy an old maid! There was bitter humor in it for Tom, and he laughed aloud in the reading-room, then, starting at his own performance, looked around him confusedly. He was alone, and his untasted drink stood at his elbow. No one had heard his harsh, strange outburst. He tossed off the cocktail and sank back in his easy chair to confront the vision. An old maid. And he was an old bachelor. And it was Christmas-eve. And what a gloomy, diabolical anniversary it was for old maids and old bachelors. They had no things-in-law to invite them to dinner. They were out in the cold and their room was better than their company. Jokes? Jollities? They were all matrimonial and centred about baby's teeth or Noah's arks. The only thing for an old bachelor or old maid to do was to ransack toy shops and then stand aside. Merry Christmas? How in the name of Santa Claus was an old bachelor or an old maid to have a merry Christmas? And why in time shouldn't they be merry if they could?

Five minutes later, the servant had to announce twice that dinner was served before Tom turned his head, which caused that functionary to reflect that Mr. Wiggin was getting a little deaf. He was looking straight before him into the fire, as though he were interested in the processes of combustion or the price of coal. He turned at the second summons with a start.

"What's that, Simon? Mr. Bell waiting for me? Oh, of course; dinner is ready. Tell him—tell him," he added with a feverish, excited manner as he sprang to his feet, "that I'll be with him in a moment. I must use the tele-

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phone first. I'll put it through," he added to himself as he dashed from the room, "if it takes a leg."

Whatever Tom was bent on almost cost him a bone of some sort at the start, for just beyond the door of the reading-room he bumped full into George Hapgood, a stout, dignified-looking man of about fifty. When Tom realized who it was his eyes gleamed joyously, and in lieu of an apology he blurted out:

"You're just the man I'm looking for, Hapgood. Will you do me the favor to dine with me to-morrow? Now don't say you can't, for you must."

"To-morrow? To-morrow's Christmas, isn't it?" was the inquiry, with just a shade of melancholy in the tone.

"Yes. And we're out of it—two old bachelors like you and me. I'm going to bring a few choice spirits together to prove that the things-in-law can't have all the fun. Say you'll come. Here, at seven."

"I—I was going to dine with my brother, but I got a telegram from him this afternoon saying that the children had broken out with scarlet fever and——"

"I understand, old man. So did mine. I mean—we're all in the same boat. Then I shall count on you at seven."

"Thank you kindly, Wiggin. I'll be glad to come," answered Hapgood, with a grave, courteous bow. Tom remembered having heard it said that Hapgood had never really smiled since his lady-love, Marian Blake, married Willis Bolles twenty-five years before. He was a brilliant lawyer and an influential man, but he had never been known to smile, and he habitually fought shy of all entertainments where the other sex was to be encountered, as though he feared contagion.

"I thought I wouldn't tell him that there might be women. It'll do him good to meet a few," chuckled Tom, as he pursued his way to the telephone box.

"Is that Albion Hall?"

"Yes, seh."

"Is Mr. Maxwell there?"

"No, seh, Mr. Maxwell is gone home."

"Who are you?"

"The janitor, seh."

"Is the hall engaged for to-morrow night?"

"Can't say, seh. Haven't any orders. You mean Christmas night, seh?"

"Yes, to-morrow, Christmas."

"Likely not, seh."

"Where does Mr. Maxwell live?"

"Plainville, seh."

"Humph! Do you wish to make a ten-dollar bill, janitor? Very well. Take a carriage and drive out to Plainville as tight as you can fetch it, and find out if Mr. Thomas Wiggin—he knows me—can have the hall to-morrow night. Tell Mr. Maxwell that if he'll meet me at my rooms at eight o'clock to-morrow, Christmas morning, I'll add twenty-five per cent. to the price. Do you understand? Now repeat what I've said to you. That's right. Go along now and report to me at the Blackstone Club as soon as you get back, and for every five minutes which you take from an hour and a half I'll add an extra dollar to the ten."

Tom looked at his watch reflectively. It was a quarter past seven. He must dine first, if only not to break faith with Frazer Bell, whom he had kept waiting abominably long already. He stopped an instant, however, at the office on his way to join Frazer, so as to make sure that he could have the large green dining-room for the following evening.

"To-morrow's Christmas, you know, Mr. Wiggin?" suggested the steward, respectfully.

"I know it, Dunklee. Is there any reason why I shouldn't give a dinner party on Christmas day?"

"No, sir, of course not. I merely thought that perhaps you were going to dine elsewhere and had forgotten it was Christmas day."

"I dine here, and—I wish a dinner for, say sixteen—I can't tell the precise number yet—a ladies' dinner. And I wish it to be as handsome as possible. You mustn't fail me," he added, noticing that the steward looked rather dismayed. "Start your messengers at once and spare no expense, if you have to drag the butchers from their beds to get what you need. I'll see to the flowers myself; I have a green-house in my mind's eye which I intend to buy solidly for the occasion."

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"Very well, Mr. Wiggin, I'll do my best, though it's late to begin, sir."

Frazer Bell was sitting before his raw oysters the picture of polite despair, seeing in his mind's eye the delicate dinner which he had ordered being done to death and getting lukewarm.

"My dear fellow, I owe you a thousand pardons, but I had to telephone. If our dinner is spoiled, or whether it is or not, I want you to promise to dine with me to-morrow night. I have evolved a scheme while we were waiting, which I will unfold to you presently. Go on with your oysters. I hope you will forgive me."

"To-morrow, Christmas?"

"Yes. I propose to give an entertainment to all the old bachelors and maiden ladies of my acquaintance, if they'll come. A dinner here followed by a dance at Albion Hall, and Dunklee is arranging for the dinner. I'm going to invite all the old timers, and I need your advice as to the list. For a starter I'll put down the three Bellknap girls."

Tom whipped out his pencil and proceeded to utilize the back of the bill of fare which Frazer had had drawn up to gloat over.

"See first what you're going to eat, old man."

"It's sure to be admirable if you ordered it. It has always been a matter of wonder to me that neither of those Bellknap girls have married. Then there's Georgiana Dixon, in the same block. Glad I remembered her. Charming girl too. She ought to have been married years ago. Come to think of it, you used to be a friend of hers, Frazer."

"Yes, I did. What on earth are you up to, Tom? Are you in earnest?"

"Never more so in my life. I tell you there's a tacit conspiracy in this town—I dare say it's all over the planet—against us poor wretches who are old enough to be married and haven't, and they—the married ones I mean—like to keep us out in the cold, as a sort of punishment, may be, because we've chosen to remain single. I'm sick of it for one, and I'm going to organize a revolution. I'm going to have a grand family meeting of all the poor lonely spirits like you and me and the Bellknap girls and Georgiana Dixon and George Hapgood, and—and the things-in-law may go to the devil. Now put your wits on this thing, Frazer, while you disintegrate your terrapin. Come, girls first."

"Do you suppose they'll ever come?" asked Frazer, with an amazed grin. He was essentially a conventional man without a spark of imagination, and he could scarcely believe that Tom was really in earnest.

"They've got to come. Why shouldn't they come?"

"They'll think it queer."

"It isn't queer. It's righteous."

"All right. Put down Miss Mamie Scott. She will never see thirty again."

"Capital. Poor soul! A girl to make any man happy."

"There's Susan Davis."

"To be sure. She isn't pretty, but she's good. Joe Elliott used to be partial to her before he ran a rig with that smug-faced doll who jilted him. What a fool he was! We'll ask him too."

To tell the truth, even the gastronomic Frazer Bell, in spite of the fact that the dinner was very far from spoiled, presently forgot what he was eating and drinking in the absorbing process of selection. By the time the cheese and a rare glass of Burgundy arrived the list was finished, and Tom was eager to escape to the reading-room to prepare the notes of invitation, which must be sent at once. There were forty-six in all to be invited, out of which he hoped to secure enough for a full-fledged dinner-party. Those who could not come to dinner were to be urged to join them at Albion Hall later.

The matter of wording the invitation was a serious one, and Tom sat feeling of the bald spot on his crown for several minutes. At last, with a desperate air he plunged his pen into the inkstand and wrote as follows to Miss Madeline Bellknap:

"My dear Miss Bellknap: I beg as a favor that you and both your sisters will honor me with your company at dinner to-morrow, December 25th, at the Blackstone Club, at seven o'clock. I

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am bringing together, in celebration of a bachelor's Christmas, a number of kindred spirits who have no things-in-law to cater to their sympathetic needs, and yet who have a no less equal right to a merry Christmas. After dinner we shall adjourn to Albion Hall to dance, to which I trust that you or some of you, if unable to dine with me, will come at ten o'clock. With the compliments of the season and the sincere hope that you will oblige me, I am,

"Very sincerely yours,
"THOMAS WIGGIN."

"How is that, Frazer?"

"I guess it's all right," said Frazer, in a tone which suggested that he was far from sure whether it was not all wrong.

"Perfectly respectful and to the point, isn't it?"

"Yes. Hold on, Tom. How about a chaperon? They won't come without a chaperon."

Tom bit his lip. "I won't have a chaperon. I'll be — if I will have a chaperon." He puckered his brow gloomily; then, with a sudden wave of his hand, he cried,

"I have it."

Thereupon he dashed off this postscript:

"P.S. We are all old enough to take care of ourselves."

For the next two hours Tom and Frazer devoted themselves with feverish industry to the task of writing the two-score invitations. In such an emergency forgery seemed allowable, and, without attempting to imitate the Wiggin chirography, Frazer boldly signed the name of Thomas. As soon as every half-dozen notes were finished they were hurried to their destination by special messengers. The clock struck half-past ten when the last was done. Tom handed over to the boy in attendance the final batch, all save a single one. While he was writing this he could have written half a dozen of the others, and now that it was written and addressed he drew it from the envelope to read once more the words which he had penned so carefully. Their tenor was essentially the same, but he had stricken out a phrase or two here, and added a phrase or two there, to make sure that she would understand the nature of the invitation. Then he arose with it in his hand and said, "Good-night, Frazer. A thousand thanks. I'll leave this one myself. Wish you merry Christmas."

III.

AT half past six on the evening of Christmas day Tom Wiggin stood in the large green dining-room of the Blackstone Club, surveying a magnificently appointed table. Roses, pansies, and violets from the green-house which he had bought out at ten o'clock that morning, lay tastefully banked and scattered upon the cloth, intertwined with masses of evergreen and holly gay with berries. Christmas wreaths and festoons were lavishly arranged around the walls. Dunklee had assured him that there should be no dearth of palatable viands, and, most important fact of all, there had been twenty acceptances for dinner, happily just ten men and ten women, and nearly a dozen more acceptances for the dance. He had been in a mad whirl since daybreak, but he believed now that he had accomplished everything except to arrange the seats at table, which needed a little quiet reflection.

The answers had begun to arrive shortly after breakfast. The first had been a refusal, a little curt and stiff in tone, as though the lady in question, notwithstanding the fact that she had promised to dine with one of her family, wished to give him to understand that she took herself too seriously to accept such an invitation under any circumstances. Tom's heart sank within him, and he said to himself that he had made a mess of it. Five minutes later his features were as complacent as those of a Cheshire cat. The Misses Bellknap were coming, all three of them. They had ordered dinner at home, but were coming notwithstanding, to help Mr. Wiggin pass a merry Christmas and confound the things-in-law.

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"They are three noble sports," Tom had said to himself, as he danced around his apartment waving the mildly-scented note.

Other answers came thick and fast. Of course many had engagements, but most of these expressed deep regret at their inability to attend, and several who could not come to dinner promised to put in an appearance at the dance. There were a few other chilling refusals. Miss Susan Davis, whom Tom had characterized as not pretty but good, let him perceive very plainly that she considered the invitation indelicate. On the other hand, Miss Mamie Scott, who would never see thirty again, had written him spiritedly that it was a comfort to know that she was old enough to take care of herself, and that she was coming without her mother for the first time in her life.

And she? Tom had not heard until nearly noon, and he had realized, as he held the little neatly-sealed note in his hand, that if she was going to fail him his pleasure in the whole business would be utterly gone. His wrist shook as though he had the palsy, and he hated to look. She was coming; yes, she was coming. Her father and mother were going to dine with her brother-in-law, and though she had promised to do the same she thought she would enjoy better the very original dinner to which he had invited her. "And, as you say," she wrote in conclusion, "we are certainly old enough to take care of ourselves." She was coming; yes, she was coming, and whatever happened now, he was going to have a merry Christmas.

And how was he to seat them? It was rather a nice problem. To begin with, Tom sandwiched in George Hapgood between the eldest Miss Bellknap and Miss Mamie Scott, which was as delightful a situation as any man could wish to have. Frazer Bell must go beside Georgiana Dixon, and Harry Abercombie, who had been dangling for years in the train of Angelina Phillips until everybody was tired, should take her in and have the second Miss Bellknap on his other side. Tom was making pretty good progress, but what really troubled him was whether it would do for him to place Isabelle Hardy next to himself. Would not such a proceeding be quite inconsistent with the vow which he had been living up to for the past five years? What sense would there be in putting himself in the way of temptation, when he knew perfectly well that she did not care a button for him? What use, indeed? And yet, as he said to himself, Christmas comes but once a year, and this was his party, and—and had not she herself stated that they certainly were old enough now to take care of themselves? Why shouldn't he sit next to her? He was no longer the sentimental, hot-headed boy of five years ago. They would enjoy themselves like any other sober bachelor and old maid. It would only be for one evening, and beginning with to-morrow he would stick to his vow as sturdily as ever. Yes, he would take in the eldest Miss Bellknap, who would be the oldest woman present, and he would put Isabelle Hardy on his left.

When he had made this important decision Tom found the arrangement of his other guests a simple matter, and after one final scrutinizing, but tolerably contented, glance around the table, he walked into the ladies' drawing-room to await the arrival of his company.

Punctually on the stroke of seven, the three Misses Bellknap swept into the room in a merry flutter. They were tall bean-poles of girls, who had naturally a prancing style, and they were in their very best bib and tucker, which included great puffed sleeves and nodding plumes in their hair. In one breath they told Tom that they considered it a grand idea, that they had been practically nowhere for years, and that it was a real pleasure to be thought of and taken down from the shelf, if only for a single evening. It was evident that they had come determined to have at least a good time, if not a riot, for when their eyes rested on George Hapgood standing in the door-way the picture of blank amazement, all three giggled convulsively as though they were eighteen.

"Come in, George, don't be afraid," said Tom. "They won't bite."

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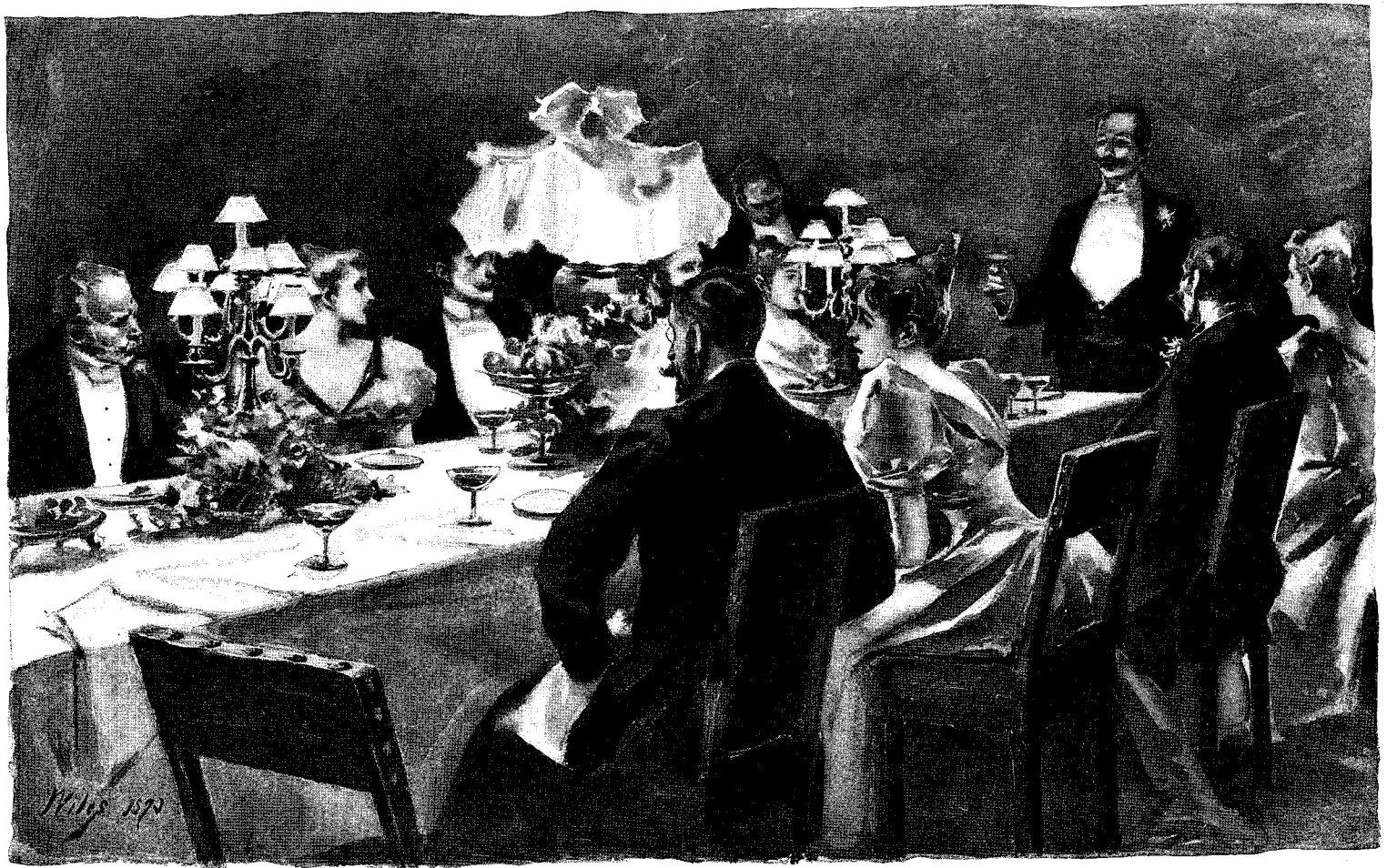

DRAWN BY IRVING R. WILES.

"Wish you merry Christmas and—and here's to *her* !"—Page 678.

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"We really won't hurt you, Mr. Hapgood," said Miss Madeline, the eldest; "do come in."

It was too late for the woman-hater to draw back now, so, like the man he was, he braced his muscles and faced the music. He bowed with grave courtesy to the youngest Miss Bellknap; he bowed with a faint smile—just a ghostly glimmer, but, nevertheless, a smile—to Miss Arabella, the second Miss Bellknap; and when he faced the eldest Miss Bellknap, who happening to be the furthest away from him was the last to be reached, his features broke down completely, and he positively laughed—laughed for the first time in twenty years.

"Do shake hands, Mr. Hapgood," said Miss Madeline, "this is like old times."

And now everybody began to arrive in a bunch in the midst of a general handshaking and chorus of merriment. The arrival of each old stager, masculine or feminine, was greeted with fresh exclamations of delight, and a spirit of contagious frivolity was rampant from the very start.

Tom was already bubbling over with enjoyment, but his eyes were glued on the doorway. There she was at last, looking—yes, looking younger and prettier than he had ever seen her in his life, and dressed bewitchingly. An old maid! It was impossible. It was monstrous.

"It was very good of you to come, Miss Hardy."

"I am very much pleased to be here, Mr. Wiggin."

Most conventional phraseology, and there was really no reason why Tom should keep repeating the words over to himself in a dazed sort of fashion until he was called to account by the opening of the doors.

"Dinner is served, sir."

Then readjusting his faculties, Tom gave his arm to Miss Madeline Bellknap, every Jack did the same to his appointed Jill, and the company filed gayly into the dining-room.

Beginning with the oysters, there was almost a pandemonium of conversation, and tongues wagged fast and eagerly. There were to be no speeches—Tom had determined on that—or rather only a single one, and this was an after-thought. When the champagne was passed, and all the glasses were filled, Tom rose in his seat. Everyone stopped talking, and there was an expectant hush.

"I wish to offer a toast," he said, "a toast for the old bachelors to drink. Wish you merry Christmas and—and here's to *her!*"

There was a brief pause, and then George Hapgood, and in his wake the whole table, rose like one man and emptied their brimming glasses.

"Here's to *her!*"

Tom did not look to right nor to left, not even out of the corner of his eye, as he drained to the last drop the sparkling wine. He would keep to his vow and drink to her in secret. Some of the ladies giggled slightly, and all looked at their plates. It was just a little awkward, even for the most unattached, until Miss Madeline Bellknap rose, glass in hand, and said valiantly, with a wave of her napkin:

"My dears, I give you a toast for you to drink. Wish you merry Christmas. We are old enough to take care of ourselves; and—and here's to *him!*"

Then there was babel. The women stood up to a woman, and the toast was consummated.

Miss Hardy laughed gayly with the rest. Presently she turned to Tom and said, as if it had suddenly occurred to her, though they had been sitting side by side talking commonplaces ever since dinner began:

"I have not really seen you for years, Mr. Wiggin."

"I have been busy—very busy," said Tom, in a tone which, though he did not intend it to be so, was almost brusque.

"So I have heard. I understand you have been very successful in your business."

"I have stuck to it, that's all."

"I really don't think we have met so as to talk together since Mrs. Carter's ball, and that was—let me see—five years ago this coming New Year's eve. I remember we danced the German together, and—you sent me some flowers which I didn't carry. Perhaps you have forgotten all about it, for five years is a long time and you have been so busy;

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but I should like to explain to you about those flowers—why I didn't carry them. We are both old enough now to take care of ourselves, so there can't be any objection to my telling you, and—and you won't be offended at this late day, I'm sure. I had several bouquets that

Miss Hardy colored. "We were both young," she answered, "but now that we are older and wiser, I don't mind admitting on my side that it was stupid of me, to begin with, to give one of my bouquets to anybody, and stupid when I saw that you were put out not to

Quite contrary to the spirit of the occasion, he was down on his knees.—Page 680.

night, and Fannie Perkins, who was staying with me, had none. Fannie was shy and sensitive, and it occurred to me to offer one of mine to her. She wouldn't think of it at first, but mother urged her so strongly that she gave in at last. 'Which shall I take, Isabelle?' she asked. I thought a moment and then said, 'Take your pick, Fannie.' And she chose yours. And that is why I didn't carry it to the party. But I think you have forgotten all about it, Mr. Wiggin."

Tom looked as though he had. His chin rested on his collar, and he seemed to be staring at the table-cloth.

"I remember it as if it were yesterday," he said, sadly. "I was a fool."

tell you the truth. But wisdom is the reward of years, isn't it?" She talked easily, almost gayly. Tom suddenly realized that he had made a piece of bread which he had been clutching into a sodden ball.

"I'd like to ask you a single question." He was trying to talk easily too. "Why did you let Miss Perkins have her pick? Did you value them all equally?"

"It was because I did not value them all equally that I told her to choose. I did not wish her to think that I cared for one more than the others."

"And whose was that?"

"Five years is a long time, Mr. Wiggin. You said a single question, and

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this is two. Alas! It is the only point in the story which I have quite forgotten."

"Then why did you tell me?"

"Because I hoped that we might be friends again. When people get to be as old as you and I we value our old friends. There are none exactly like them."

"And that is all?"

"What more is there, Mr. Wiggin? Except to thank you for your lovely book, and to wish you a merry Christmas."

"The carriages are waiting," said a servant in Tom's ear.

The dinner was over and it was time to set out for Albion Hall. The ladies filed into the drawing-room in order, as Miss Madeline phrased it, to give the old bachelors a chance for a short cigar. When that was over Tom bundled his company into carriages, and away they all went in the gayest of spirits.

Whatever belonging to the greenhouse had not been spread over the dinner-table adorned the walls of the dancing-room, and presently as joyous and hilarious a company as anyone would wish to see was tripping to the rhythm of the waltz over a perfect floor. There was just the right number for delightful dancing, no young inexperienced couples to bump into everybody, no things-in-law to stand in the way and look stupid; no one but genuine old stagers taken down from the shelf for one last glorious frolic. You should have seen George Hapgood spinning round with Miss Madeline! How Frazer Bell grinned as he whirled Miss Mamie Scott from one corner of the hall to the other! And Tom? Where was Tom?

As some of you who have danced at Albion Hall may remember, there is a very small bower-like ante-room, or offshoot, or whatever you choose to call it, a sort of adjunct to the supper-room, fit for just one couple to withdraw to. On this Christmas evening it was a veritable hiding-place, for the entrance to it was screened by two noble evergreens which stood as sentinels to demand a pass-word. If the gay company suspected that Tom Wiggin was there, no one was rash enough to peep within and ascertain. Tom Wiggin *was* there, and quite contrary to the spirit of the occasion, he was down on his knees unbosoming the love which he had been smothering for five years to the girl of his heart. Only think of it! And he, a bald-headed old bachelor, and she an old maid old enough to take care of herself. There she sat with her hands before her and a smile on her face, letting him go on. And then, strangest part of all, when he had finished and told how miserable he had been while he was so very busy and absorbed in his business, she suddenly remembered whose bouquet it was she had valued most five years before, although she had declared an hour earlier that she had totally forgotten. And then—but the rest is a secret, known only to the sentinel evergreens and themselves. That is, the rest save one thing. It was after they had agreed to live as bachelor and maid no longer, and Tom was sitting looking at Isabelle as if he had had no dinner, he remarked, with a sudden outburst, as though he was angry with destiny and a much outraged being:

"Why on earth did I not find out five years ago that you loved me?"

"Because," said the pretty spinster in question, "you never asked me, Tom, dear."

Tom Wiggin looked a trifle sheepish in spite of his joy. "I never thought of that," he said. "I'm afraid I never did."

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A SEARCH FOR DELLA ROBBIA MONUMENTS IN ITALY.

By Allan Marquand.

Arms of the University Council of Merchants, at Or S. Michele, Florence.

(By Luca della Robbia.)

ARCHÆOLOGICAL pursuits have a new charm when we can leave behind books and other such sources of information and open our eyes in the presence of the objects themselves.

My interest in Italian Renaissance sculpture had been aroused by a study of the fine Robbia altar-piece in the Metropolitan Museum. I had made a careful examination of this monument, and determined its probable authorship and date by comparison with photographs of other works. But I was conscious of the fact that photographs at the best give us an inadequate notion of objects; and I wished to examine other originals of the same kind, in order to test the validity of my conclusions.

I sailed for Genoa from New York on May 6, 1892, having provided myself with a good camera and a sufficiency of celluloid films, knowing beforehand that there were many of these monuments which had never been photographed, and were consequently imperfectly known.

I could not well have selected a more interesting field for observation. The monuments of the Robbia school are well distributed throughout Tuscany; they are found also in the Marches and in Umbria, and as far south as Rome and Naples. Many of them have travelled to the museums and private collections of northern Europe, and a few have reached this country.

These sculptured monuments are made of terra-cotta, and covered with an opaque stanniferous glaze, in which the colors are mixed as in enamel. The figured reliefs are sometimes white against a blue background, but often

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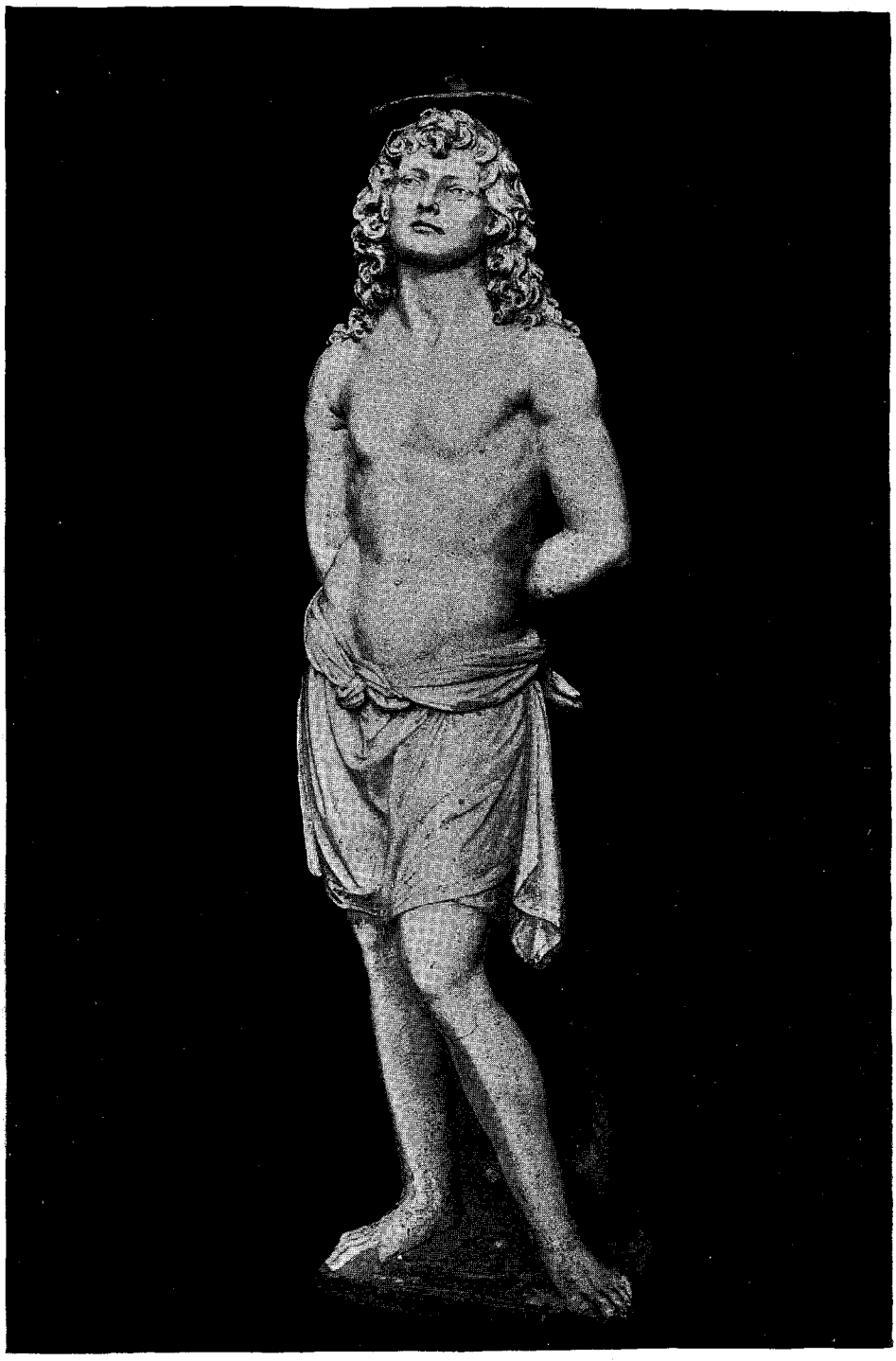

S. Sebastian, in the Hospital at Montalcino.

(Della Robbia School.)

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Lunette, at S. Maria della Quercia, Viterbo.
(By Andrea della Robbia.)

exhibit a variety of colors. The popular impression — for which Vasari is responsible — that the art of making these glazes was discovered by Luca della Robbia, that it was preserved as a secret and perished with his school, has proved to be unfounded. Opaque glazes were applied to sculpture during the Gothic period in Spain, and found their way to Italy long before Luca della Robbia was born. They disappear in the late Renaissance — partly because paint and varnish produced brilliant effects on terra-cotta with less labor, and partly because stucco and paintings on canvas were cheaper than sculptures in marble and terra-cotta. The spirit of the age also demanded brilliant reds and naturalistic flesh colors, and these were impossible in opaque glazes. To the art historian these monuments afford many an interesting and perplexing problem. They differ widely in style and artistic merit, and it is no easy task to assign to each its proper historical position.

Happily for me, a catalogue of three hundred and fifty Robbia monuments in Italy had been compiled by Cavallucci and Molinier; so I was enabled, with the assistance of geographical dictionaries and government maps, to plan a tour of several months' duration, which would enable me to see them all. Many of the works of this school are found in cities, but a large proportion are in remote country villages; and the search for them carried me over mountains and into valleys, quite out of the track of the ordinary traveller.

On arriving at Genoa, I found in the Palazzo Bianco an interesting altar-piece in glazed terra-cotta, representing the Coronation of the Virgin; but it is difficult to attribute it to an author. At Massa there are some polychrome fragments of an altar, representing the Nativity; but they are precious fragments for our purposes, for they are authenticated as the work of Benedetto Buglioni, the most talented pupil of Giovanni della Robbia. They represent finer workmanship than his "Coronation of the Virgin," at Pistoia, and his "Samaritan Woman at the Well," in Perugia.

In the Camposanto at Pisa I found also an authenticated altar, the work of Giovanni della Robbia, finished in 1520. It is an Assumption of the Virgin in the presence of SS. James, Peter, Mark,

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Lunette, in the Via dell' Agnolo, Florence.

(By Luca della Robbia.)

and Ansano. It has been much injured by repainting; but, even in its original condition, it represents a degenerate stage of the art. It falls far short of the works of Luca and Andrea della Robbia, and is inferior even to some of the works of Buglioni.

In the chapel of the Castle, now a prison, at Lari, is a Madonna and Child, very highly praised by Baldinucci, and ascribed to Giovanni della Robbia. It certainly does not deserve to be singled out for special honor, being one of the later, lifeless products of the school; and there are several replicas of it in various museums. In the court-yard of the Castle we saw, embedded in the wall, coats of arms in glazed terra-cotta of the early sixteenth century. Armorial bearings of this character are found in many Italian towns. They occasionally enable students of sculpture to fix a date for some neighboring monument.

There were two valleys which deserved a visit before I started for Florence; one of these is the valley of the Serchio. I started from Lucca, having examined the Robbia monuments in S. Frediano, S. Concordio, and the Palazzo Publico, and drove up the valley. It was a dusty drive as far as the Baths of Lucca; but I found a fine altar-piece of S. George and the Dragon at Pieve di Brancoli, and a charming tabernacle at Anchiano. At Anchiano I had my first experience of the excitement produced in a small Italian town by the arrival of a stranger. The men are idly seated in the principal thoroughfare, and they all rise and follow a stranger into the church. The amateur photographer is still a curiosity in Italy. I seldom carried my camera into a country church without being followed by twenty or thirty men, women, and children. It is interesting to notice that the women take advantage of such occasions to kneel down and say their prayers, habit enabling them to count their beads and satisfy their curiosity at the same time.

From the Baths of Lucca the scenery is wilder as we journey up the valley to Gallicano and Barga and Castelnuovo. The Robbia monuments in this valley have a fine quality and uncommon character. Of these places Barga is by far the most interesting. In the Cathedral is a square marble pul-

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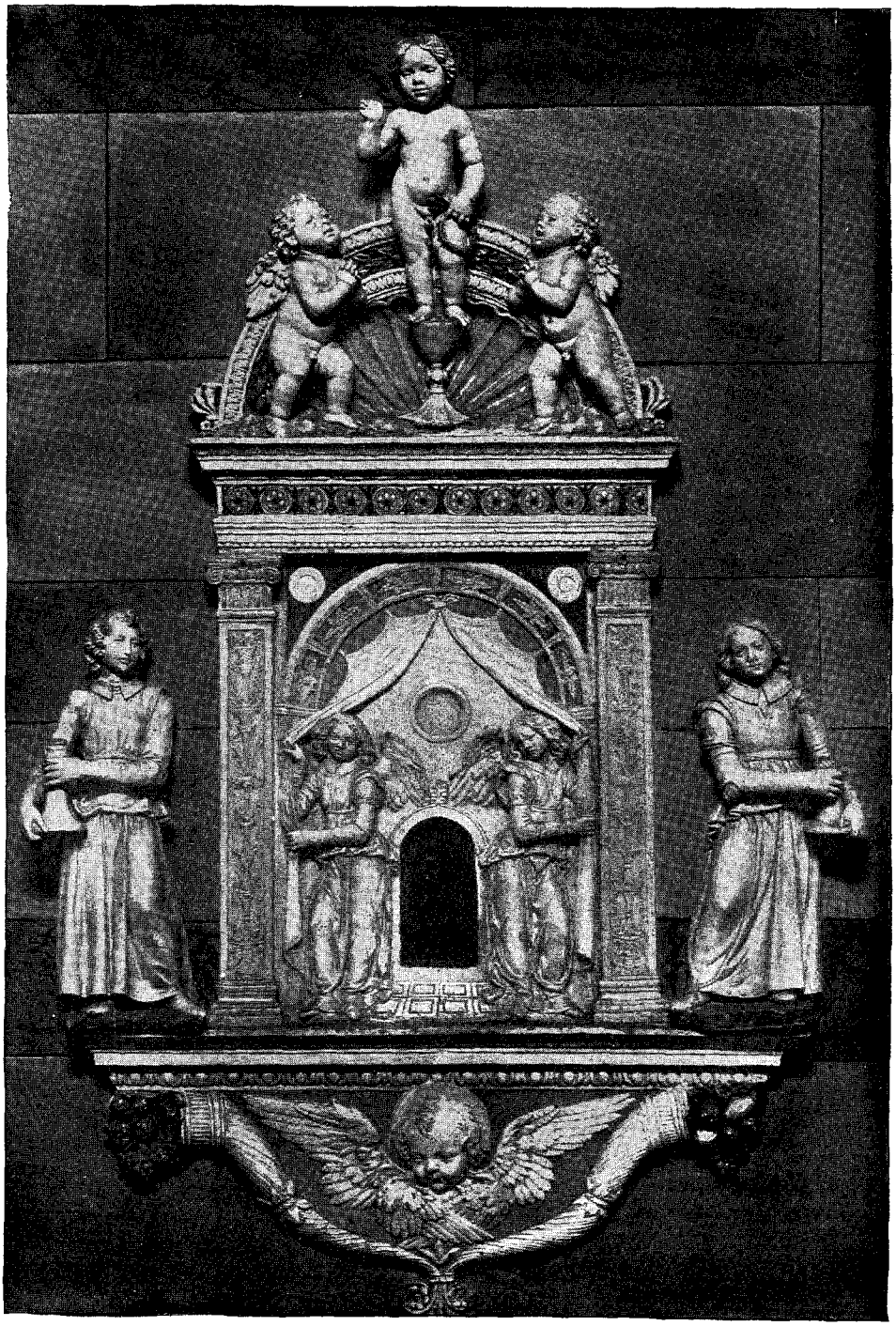

Tabernacle at Barga Cathedral.

(Atelier of Andrea della Robbia.)

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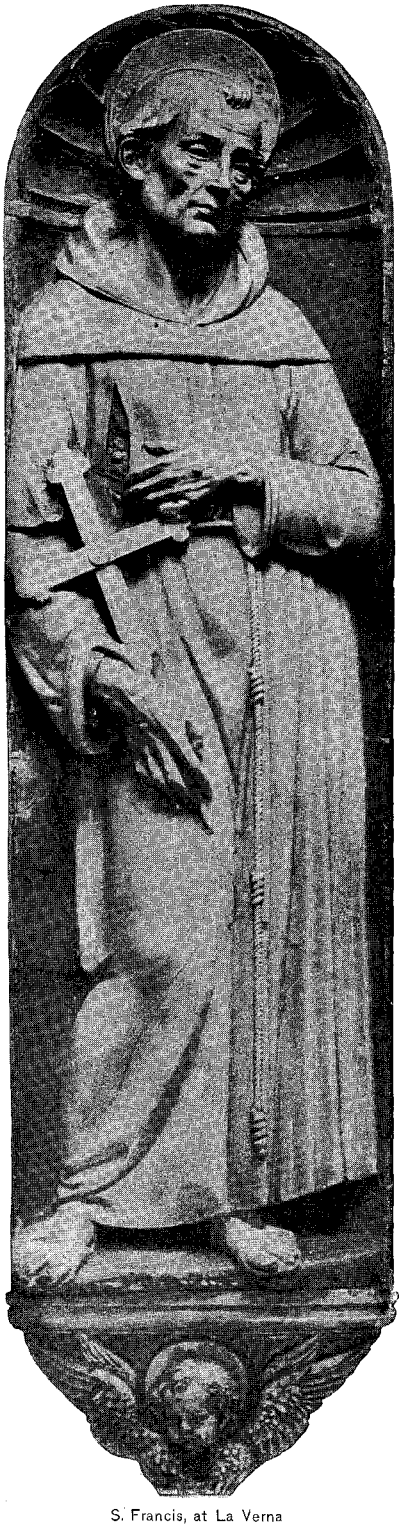

S. Francis, at La Verna
(By Andrea della Robbia.)

pit of the thirteenth century, elaborately carved with representations of the Evangelists, the Adoration of the Magi, the Annunciation, and the Nativity. It is a magnificent specimen of Lombard Romanesque sculpture, than which there is none finer in all Italy. Barga has also the good fortune to contain several fine altar-pieces, statues, and a tabernacle (page 685), which I attribute to Andrea della Robbia. During the years 1489 and 1491 we find Andrea making a lunette for the Cathedral at Prato, and a beautiful frieze for the church of S. Maria delle Carceri, in the same town. We feel the influence of both these works at Pieve di Brancoli, and think it probable that he settled for a while in the neighborhood of Barga. The locality still called Fornace may have been the spot where he set up his furnace.

In his earlier works Andrea had treated terra-cotta as a substitute for marble, and his figures are white against a blue background. Here his altars are substitutes for painting; they are more pictorial in composition, and show a variety of colors beneath the glaze. They set the fashion for the polychromatic works of his son Giovanni and subsequent members of the school. In many a country church in Italy we find small wall tabernacles containing the symbols of the Sacred Host. Several of these have found their way to the National Museum at Florence, but there is none more beautiful than the tabernacle at Barga. The acolytes, with candelabra standing on either side, have something of the dignified beauty of Luca della Robbia's creations; the winged cherub below and the angels drawing back the curtains are characteristic of Andrea; while the adoring cherubs, between which the infant Christ is standing on the chalice, may be regarded as prototypes of the cherubs which surmount Giovanni's much-admired *lavabo* in the sacristy of S. Maria Novella, Florence.

There is another valley in this region which it was worth while to visit. It is in the Pistoian Alps, extending from Pracchia to Cutigliano. Somewhere in this region there may still exist two authenticated altars by Santi Buglioni,

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The Adoration at La Verna.

(By Luca della Robbia.)

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The Annunciation, at La Verna.
(By Luca della Robbia.)

the sculptor named by Vasari as the latest representative of the school. It was important to secure, if possible, some indications of his style of work, for he was employed upon the celebrated frieze of the Ceppo Hospital at Pistoia, and was doubtless the author of many altars in the region around Florence. Twice I journeyed to this valley in search of a chapel at Croce all' Alpe, which contained these authenticated altars. But though I crossed the high mountains, I could not find a trace of the chapel, or any one who knew of its existence. The monuments at Gavinana, Lizano, and Cutigliano are artistically inferior to those in the valley of the Serchio, but they tell us of the style of Santi Buglioni. We see in them the influence of Santi's master, Benedetto Buglioni; and in the two altars at Gavinana especially there are points of contact with the lost altars at Croce all' Alpe.

I cannot easily forget my experience with the peasants of this retired town. I endeavored to keep them out of the church while I was engaged with my photography; but this was impracticable, and they flocked in to watch my operations. In posing the camera it became necessary for a moment to secure a balance by putting one foot upon the high altar. This was no sooner done than an old man shouted out, "*Ignorante! Ignorante!*" I immediately admitted the

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Madonna and Child, in the Museo Nazionale, Florence.

(By Luca della Robbia.)

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Coronation of the Virgin, at the Ceppo Hospital, Pistoia.

(By Benedetto Buglioni.)

act of sacrilege, and endeavored to atone for my offence: but the old man refused to be comforted, and, had not the sacristan come to my rescue, I might have been ignominiously ousted from the church. It is needless to remark that I learned henceforth that a photographer must respect the objects which the people reverence.

From one end of Italy to the other I was asked if I had seen the frieze of the Ceppo Hospital at Pistoia. From its prominent position, its extensive character, its interesting subjects, and its bright coloring, this frieze impresses the modern Italian more strongly than the many worthier productions of the Robbia school. Its authorship is still a matter of discussion, though the records name only Giovanni della Robbia and the two Buglioni as having received payment in connection with the work. A comparison with his authenticated works will show that Giovanni was the author of the medallions below the frieze. The Assumption of the Virgin, which is reproduced on page 693, is a thoroughly characteristic example of Giovanni's work. But the frieze itself shows a scheme of coloring, modes of composition, and plastic forms by quite another hand. Of Benedetto Buglioni, the documents tell us that he made a *Nostra Donna* for the Ceppo Hospital. As the medallions are unmistakably by Giovanni della Robbia, this reference fixes for us the authorship of the lunette over the side-door representing the Coronation of the Virgin. Above is a photographic reproduction of this lunette, and the reader who is familiar with Florence will at once recall the similar but more elaborate Coronation over the door of the Ognissanti, and be able to refer it to its proper author. It is not impossible that Benedetto was engaged upon the frieze itself, since the figures of the Virtues bear a resemblance to his work; but it is probable that the frieze as a whole was designed, and in great part executed, by Santi Buglioni. He died before it was finished, and a local painter, named Paladini, some sixty

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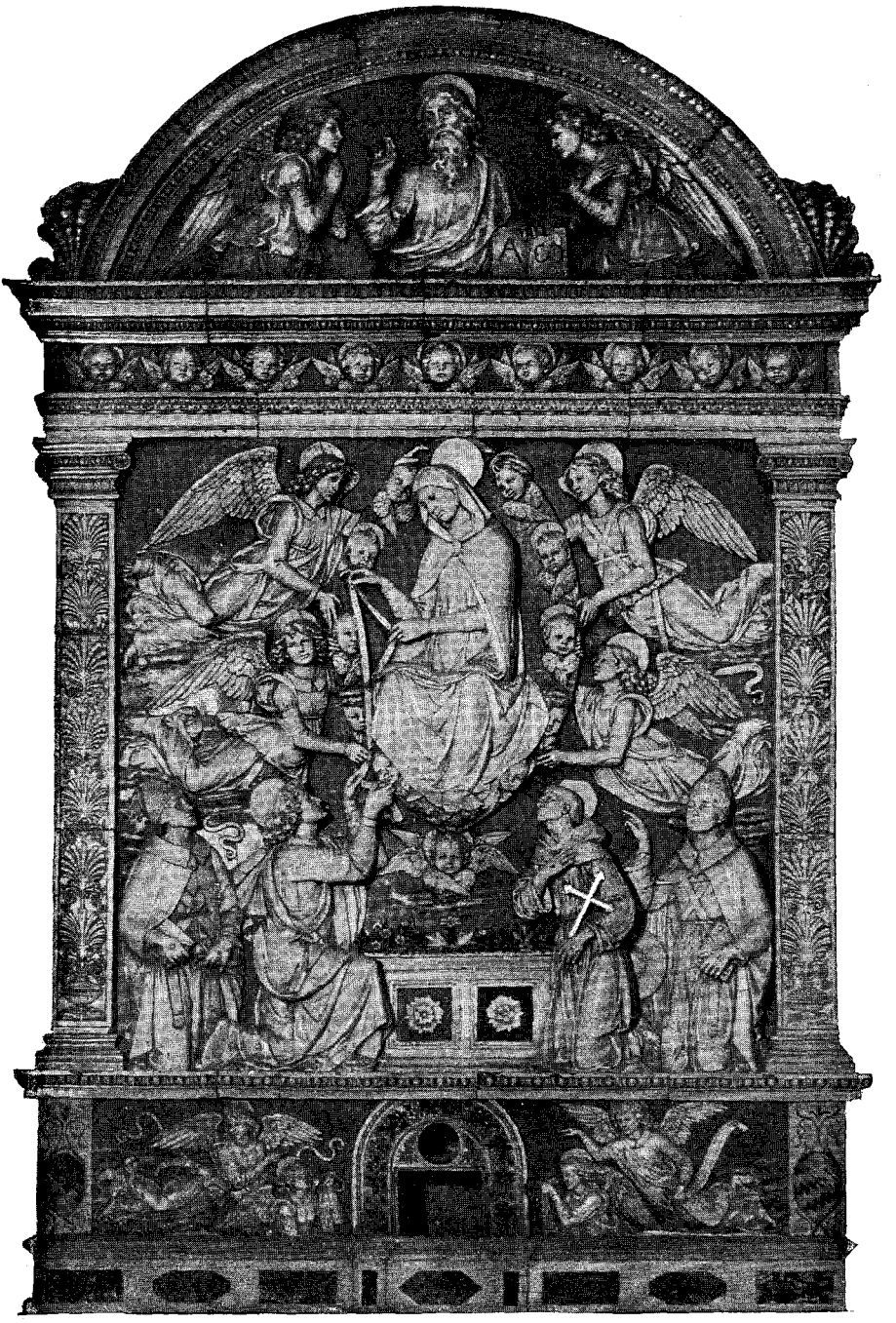

Madonna della Cintola, at La Verna.

(By Andrea della Robbia.)

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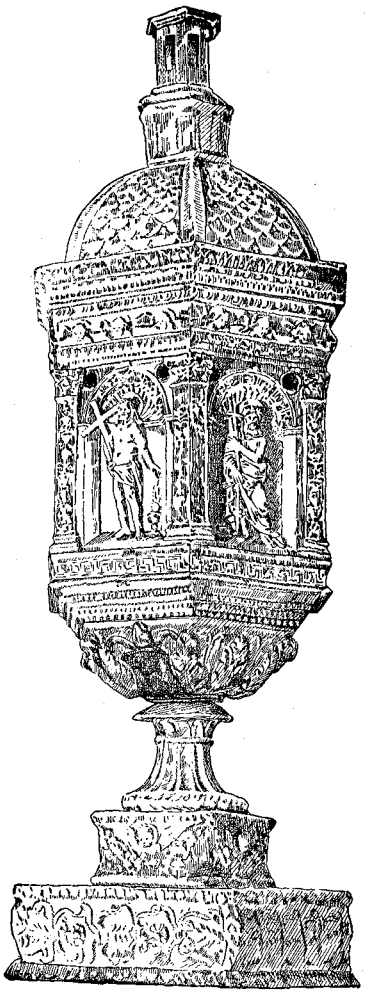
years later, is responsible for its final and least interesting portion.

I cannot give more than a passing mention of Andrea's lunette over the cathedral door at Pistoia and of the attractive panelling with which he decorated the ceiling of the cathedral porch (page 694); nor can we linger at Prato, though its cathedral possesses an important lunette by Andrea, and several other churches contain monuments from his workshop. We must hasten on to Florence.



Ciborium, at Galatrona.
(Atelier of Giovanni della Robbia.)

Nearly all the works which Italy contains by the elder Luca may be found within a radius of ten miles from Florence. Strangely enough, Andrea della Robbia is poorly represented here. To become acquainted with his work we must visit Arezzo, La Verna, Prato, Pistoia, Siena, Foiano, and Viterbo. His son Giovanni left some of his most important works in Florence, and we may here trace Giovanni's style from the beautiful *lavabo* in S. Maria Novella to the monstrosities in the Museo Nazionale. The neighborhood of Florence abounds in the works of the Buglioni and other members of the school; so it requires some discrimination to discover the important works. The cathedral and its museum show us Luca's skill as a worker in bronze and marble, though the bronze doors of the sacristy are not entirely by his hand, and the architectural setting of the famous marble sculptures of singing boys is largely a modern, though admirable, restoration. The cathedral also contains Luca's earliest dated works in terra-cotta, the Resurrection (1443) and the Ascension (1446). The visitor is less likely to see two beautiful statues in the second sacristy. These represent acolytes bearing candelabra (page 695) superior in dignity and power to the candelabra-bearing angels by Niccolo dell' Arca and Michelangelo at Bologna. But I must restrict myself to pointing out a few of the works of the elder Luca.

The visitor to Florence is not likely to miss seeing Luca's medallions in the Pazzi Chapel and at S. Miniato. He will also visit Or S. Michele; but here is not so likely to appreciate at their full value the beautiful medallions (page 681) that encircle its exterior. Two of them, though mentioned by Vasari as works of Luca della Robbia, have never been photographed before. Owing to their elevated position, it is difficult to see them properly, even with strong glasses, from the second story windows of adjoining houses. A document has recently come to light showing that Luca received payment for the medallion of the University Council. A large number of Robbia works are enclosed, like this, in frames of fruit and flowers; but there is none so delicately modelled and exquisitely colored.

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The Assumption, at the Ceppo Hospital, Pistoia.
(By Giovanni della Robbia.)

Luca's color sense, as well as his sculptural skill, was more refined than that of his successors.

The visitor to the Museo Nazionale will find a few good Lucas, together with a large number of works of inferior merit. A most characteristic example is the Madonna with the Child holding a quince (page 689).* Luca's Madonnas are very varied in type. He must have had different models, or at least no fixed type of the Virgin, as we may see by comparing this Madonna with the nobler type found in a lunette in the Via dell' Agnolo (page 684). Luca did nothing more beautiful than this lunette, which is still exposed to injury in a narrow street over the door of a humble shop.

We may drive in all directions from Florence, and every little village is sure to contain something which will interest the enthusiast for Robbia work. There are three of these towns which are fortunate enough to possess important works by Luca. In the church of S. Maria at Peretola is a marble tabernacle with angels of classic type and a cherub frieze in glazed terra-cotta, one of Luca's early works. A somewhat later monument is the tomb of Bishop Benozzo Federighi at S. Francisco di Paola, near Bellosguardo. Here an exquisite enamel frieze encloses a marble statue reclining on a sculptured sar-

* The same group appears in the frieze of a chapel at Impruneta; so we may regard this as one of the earliest replicas known in the Robbia school. After this replicas are more frequent.

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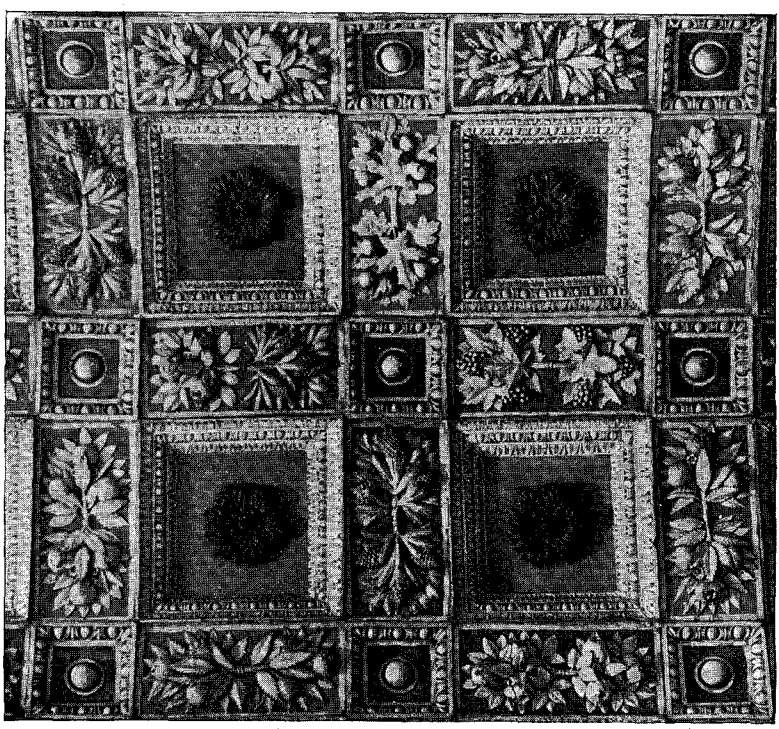

Vault of the Cathedral Porch at Pistoia.
(By Andrea della Robbia.)

cophagus. It is unique in type, and of great beauty. Ten miles south of Florence, in the old Collegiate Church of Impruneta, are three altar-pieces by Luca, one of which, that of the altar of the Holy Cross, is especially noteworthy. These monuments at Impruneta seem to have been overlooked altogether by writers on Italian sculpture, but they will amply repay a visit.

My search now carried me again away from Florence, and first into the region of Arezzo, Borgo San Sepolcro, and La Verna. This region contains the finest examples of Andrea della Robbia's work, and affords many opportunities for interesting driving trips. In the cities one may have ready access to the monuments, but in the country I occasionally experienced difficulties in making archæological studies. At Lama the inhabitants would not allow their Madonna to be photographed. I interpreted this as a fear lest publicity should lead to the Madonna being sold and carried away. But from my experience at S. Maria del Carmine a Fossi, there seems to be also a superstitious fear lest the eyes of strangers and the camera would in some way diminish the local sympathies of the Madonna. Here I called as usual for the priest; but he was absent. With some difficulty I then discovered the sacristan. He gave no sign of admitting me to the church, until I asked permission. "What do you want there?" he asked. I explained my errand; but still it was above his comprehension. Photography had apparently not entered into the range of his experience. "You wish to *telegraph* the Madonna?" was his inquiry. I satisfied myself that he did not understand my peaceful intent; so I explained to him the object of photography, and was admitted. There were no houses in the immediate neighborhood, and I expected to be free from the usual accompaniment of curious natives; but somehow they had found me out, and, one after the other, streamed into the

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Acolyte Bearing a Candelabrum, in the Old Sacristy. Florence Cathedral.

(By Luca della Robbia.)

church. At length the foremost of the clan approached me and demanded, in a loud tone of voice, if I carried with me a permit from the Government. I explained that this was unnecessary, that the authority of the priest or sacristan was sufficient; but he was unmoved, and my eloquent appeal to the people proved of no avail. They would not allow their Madonna to be open to the gaze of a stranger, and the sacristan was obliged to draw the veil over the tabernacle in which she lived.

In spite of the rudeness with which I had been treated, I could not but respect the reverential spirit with

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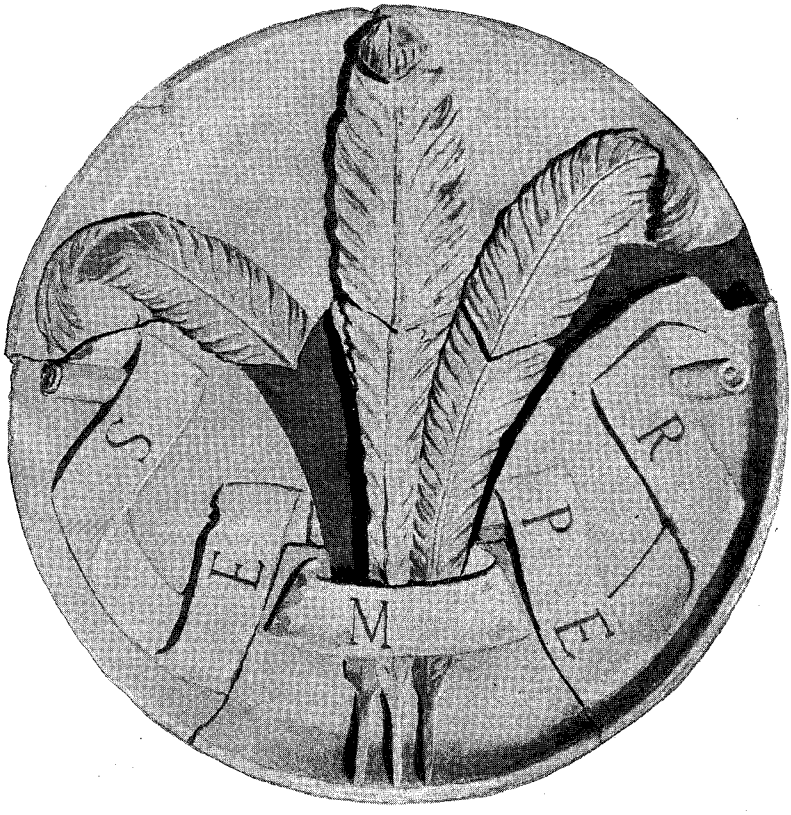
which the rustic Italian regards his Madonna. She is not an object of art, but the material body of a divine being; she belongs to the community in which she lives, and is not the property of all the world.

In the towns one can examine the monuments unmolested, and in this region it is worth while to study the works of Andrea della Robbia at Arezzo and Borgo San Sepolcro; but it is even more important to make the pilgrimage to La Verna. La Verna is seldom visited by Americans, even by those who have lived long in Italy; for few are aware of its charms. I made the ascent on foot from Pieve San Stefano, having a trusty mule to carry my portmanteau and camera. The road led through a rugged country, and the ever-braying mule made the lonely neighborhood echo the sounds of his vigorous life. From this stony approach one comes suddenly upon the fine forests of the lofty La Verna—a commanding height, with imposing views, and far more fertile than the surrounding country. There is a large monastery near the grottos in which S. Francis lived and where he received the stigmata. Eighty monks reside here, whose life and ceremonies present a picture of mediæval character which has disappeared from almost all of the monasteries of Italy. During the fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries this Franciscan brotherhood must have possessed considerable wealth, for the church and neighboring chapels contain no less than eight Robbia altar-pieces, besides smaller reliefs.



Crest of Lorenzo di Medici, in the Museo Industriale, Rome.
(By Luca della Robbia the Younger.)

These monuments as a whole are attributed by Vasari to Andrea della Robbia, and we cannot disregard this testimony altogether, since Vasari lived at Arezzo and had come into personal con-

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tact with Andrea. But we may nevertheless draw some distinctions. The highly polychromatic Deposition outside the church is an insignificant and late school-work. The polychromatic Nativity and the Pietà in the Chiesina degli Angeli are probably by Benedetto Buglioni; to Andrea della Robbia we may attribute the Assumption of the Virgin (page 691) in the same chapel. This beautiful altar-piece calls to mind the very similar monument now in the Metropolitan Museum, New York. But the La Verna example is superior both in execution and in preservation.

To Andrea also we attribute the Crucifixion in the Capella delle Stimate and the two fine reliefs of S. Francis (page 686) and S. Anthony. But there are three altar-pieces here that bear the stamp of a more inventive mind. One is the large relief of the Ascension in the principal church. It shows the effects of injury, and has a framework probably added by Andrea; but the composition, and especially the group of adoring Apostles, seem to have come from the hand of Luca himself. We are inclined to hold the same opinion concerning the fine altar-pieces representing the Annunciation (page 688) and the Adoration (page 687). Andrea's Annunciations are less dignified and show a different composition, the relative positions of the Angel and the Madonna being reversed. Andrea and his workmen also made innumerable copies of the Madonna adoring the Child; but the fountain-head seems to be this altar in the chief monastery of S. Francis. We may believe therefore that at the period represented by these altars Andrea was associated with his uncle, and was strongly influenced by him.

There was another Franciscan monastery, which once rivalled La Verna in the possession of Robbia monuments, the Osservanza near Siena; but its fine altar-pieces have been removed or destroyed, and only the Coronation of the Virgin remains. But this is Andrea's very best work.

Later in life Andrea exhibits considerable Umbrian sentimentality. His angels and Madonnas have their heads inclined to one side, and exhibit less of that spiritual beauty which characterizes his earlier works. We see this deterioration in the marble tabernacle at S. Maria delle Grazie, Arezzo, and in the lunette at Viterbo (page 683), which recently discovered documents show were made in 1507 and 1508.

Siena contains, in the Church of S. Spirito, the only known work of Fra Ambrogio della Robbia, one of the eight sons of Andrea. It is a Nativity, not in relief, but with figures in the round. Fortunately, Fra Ambrogio seems to have done nothing else to disgrace the reputation of the family.

Of the sons of Andrea, the most prolific in the production of terra-cotta monuments was Giovanni. When his works are devoid of color, as in the font and ciborium at Galatrona (page 692), they are not without merit; but such works are rare. Giovanni usually sought to adorn his works with color. He also indulged freely in the use of high relief, even when, as in the case of pilasters, low relief was preferable. Endowed with a very crude color-sense and inferior sculptural ability, he dazzles the eyes of the ignorant, but fails to please those who have even a moderate amount of artistic education.

The making of terra-cotta altar-pieces would seem to have been an extensive business enterprise under Andrea della Robbia, for we find monuments in his style at Città di Castello, others of a slightly different type at Foiano, and again another series at Montepulciano, Radicofani, Santa Fiora, and Bolsena. To this class we refer the S. Sebastian at Montalcino (page 682). It is a statue which shows the influence, but not the hand, of Andrea.

The traveller who is fond of driving will enjoy a visit to Radicofani. It is a weird Etruscan site capped with a ruined mediæval castle, from which in the early morning one may look down upon the clouds as they slumber in the surrounding valleys. From Radicofani to S. Fiora the road passes through forests of chestnuts, which furnish the chief means of support for the people. The monuments at S. Fiora, though artistically not of the highest quality, are widely known in Italy.

Quite a different series of monu-

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ments are found in the eastern district of the Marches. At Montecassiano there is a large altar-piece, which recently discovered documentary evidence attributes to Fra Mattia, a son of Andrea della Robbia. This is the more interesting, as it was not known that Andrea had a son called by this name. It also suggests that other monuments in the same district may be by the same author. One of these would seem to be an Annunciation in S. Maria del Soccorso at Arcevia. There are many unglazed monuments in neighboring villages, which have been attributed without sufficient reason to a painter from Sassoferrato, named Pietro Paolo Agabiti. This hypothesis is now being given up, and Fra Mattia is becoming the local hero. But generalizations based chiefly on the geographical proximity of monuments are likely to require serious reconsideration.

It was my good fortune on reaching Rome to discover a signed monument by the younger Luca della Robbia. He was a son of Andrea, and is known to have made pavements for the Vatican from designs by Raphael. The design of one of these pavements has been recovered from a manuscript in the Vatican, and some of the original tiles of another pavement are still preserved in the Church of S. Silvestro al Quirinale. The signed monument in the Vatican represents a Madonna between S. Michael and S. Anthony. The inscription is beneath the glaze, and evidently belongs to the original monument. It reads: LVCAS HOC OPVS FECIT 1499. This monument should be of assistance in determining the character of his work.

In the Industrial Museum at Rome there are several Coats of Arms in glazed terra-cotta, which we may attribute to this Luca—partly because he is known to have made Coats of Arms, and partly because one of these, representing the three feathers of Lorenzo il Magnifico (page 696), reappears in the design of the Vatican pavement.

The student who wishes to penetrate the mysteries of the Vatican should not be pressed for time. It took me nearly a week to secure the necessary *permesso* to photograph, and I have been congratulated in being able to accomplish it so quickly. When I next attempted to secure through the same authorities a permit to photograph in the Lateran, and expressed my anxiety to accomplish it within a few days, I was greeted with the statement, "Oh, you Americans are always in such a hurry."

Such are some of the experiences of a tour of several weeks in Italy in search of Robbia monuments. It carried me out of the beaten line of travel and through a country full of natural beauty and artistic monuments. It was a constant education, as the daily effort to assign each monument to its proper place in the history of the art forced me to careful methods of observation, and proved conclusively how unstable a guide is insight without experience. There is still much labor necessary before these monuments can be properly classified and understood, but it is a satisfaction even to make slight contributions to the sum of human knowledge.

Such studies should have also a practical value to sculptors and decorators in suggesting the variety of uses to which terra-cotta may be applied. A more economical material than marble, it may be used not only as architectural decoration in friezes, vaults, pavements, pilasters, or as a substitute for sculpture in altar-pieces, fonts, tabernacles, and statues, but frequently also as a substitute for painting. The white figured sculptures with blue background are always attractive, and polychrome medallions and groups in niches certainly lend a charm to otherwise monotonous buildings.

The durability of this work is also remarkable. Sunshine does not fade nor rain destroy it, and the dust of ages makes no impression upon its hard enamel surface.

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THE FULNESS OF LIFE.

By Edith Wharton.

I.

FOR hours she had lain in a kind of gentle torpor, not unlike that sweet lassitude which masters one in the hush of a midsummer noon, when the heat seems to have silenced the very birds and insects, and, lying sunk in the tasselled meadow-grasses, one looks up through a level roofing of maple-leaves at the vast, shadowless, and unsuggestive blue. Now and then, at ever-lengthening intervals, a flash of pain darted through her, like the ripple of sheet-lightning across such a midsummer sky; but it was too transitory to shake her stupor, that calm, delicious, bottomless stupor into which she felt herself sinking more and more deeply, without a disturbing impulse of resistance, an effort of reattachment to the vanishing edges of consciousness.

The resistance, the effort, had known their hour of violence; but now they were at an end. Through her mind, long harried by grotesque visions, fragmentary images of the life that she was leaving, tormenting lines of verse, obstinate presentments of pictures once beheld, indistinct impressions of rivers, towers, and cupolas, gathered in the length of journeys half forgotten—through her mind there now only moved a few primal sensations of colorless well-being; a vague satisfaction in the thought that she had swallowed her noxious last draught of medicine . . . and that she should never again hear the creaking of her husband's boots—those horrible boots—and that no one would come to bother her about the next day's dinner . . . or the butcher's book. . . .

At last even these dim sensations spent themselves in the thickening obscurity which enveloped her; a dusk now filled with pale geometric roses, circling softly, interminably before her, now darkened to a uniform blue-blackness, the hue of a summer night without stars. And into this darkness she felt herself sinking, sinking, with the gentle sense of security of one upheld from beneath. Like a tepid tide it rose around her, gliding ever higher and higher, folding in its velvety embrace her relaxed and tired body, now submerging her breast and shoulders, now creeping gradually, with soft inexorableness, over her throat to her chin, to her ears, to her mouth. . . . Ah, now it was rising too high; the impulse to struggle was renewed; . . . her mouth was full; . . . she was choking. . . . Help!

"It is all over," said the nurse, drawing down the eyelids with official composure.

The clock struck three. They remembered it afterward. Someone opened the window and let in a blast of that strange, neutral air which walks the earth between darkness and dawn; someone else led the husband into another room. He walked vaguely, like a blind man, on his creaking boots.

II.

SHE stood, as it seemed, on a threshold, yet no tangible gateway was in front of her. Only a wide vista of

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light, mild yet penetrating as the gathered glimmer of innumerable stars, expanded gradually before her eyes, in blissful contrast to the cavernous darkness from which she had of late emerged.

She stepped forward, not frightened, but hesitating, and as her eyes began to grow more familiar with the melting depths of light about her, she distinguished the outlines of a landscape, at first swimming in the opaline uncertainty of Shelley's vaporous creations, then gradually resolved into distincter shape—the vast unrolling of a sunlit plain, aërial forms of mountains, and presently the silver crescent of a river in the valley, and a blue stencilling of trees along its curve—something suggestive in its ineffable hue of an azure background of Leonardo's, strange, enchanting, mysterious, leading on the eye and the imagination into regions of fabulous delight. As she gazed, her heart beat with a soft and rapturous surprise; so exquisite a promise she read in the summons of that hyaline distance.

"And so death is not the end after all," in sheer gladness she heard herself exclaiming aloud. "I always knew that it couldn't be. I believed in Darwin, of course. I do still; but then Darwin himself said that he wasn't sure about the soul—at least, I think he did—and Wallace was a spiritualist; and then there was St. George Mivart——"

Her gaze lost itself in the ethereal remoteness of the mountains.

"How beautiful! How satisfying!" she murmured. "Perhaps now I shall really know what it is to live."

As she spoke she felt a sudden thickening of her heart-beats, and looking up she was aware that before her stood the Spirit of Life.

"Have you never really known what it is to live?" the Spirit of Life asked her.

"I have never known," she replied, "that fulness of life which we all feel ourselves capable of knowing; though my life has not been without scattered hints of it, like the scent of earth which comes to one sometimes far out at sea."

"And what do you call the fulness of life?" the Spirit asked again.

"Oh, I can't tell you, if you don't know," she said, almost reproachfully. "Many words are supposed to define it — love and sympathy are those in commonest use, but I am not even sure that they are the right ones, and so few people really know what they mean."

"You were married," said the Spirit, "yet you did not find the fulness of life in your marriage?"

"Oh, dear, no," she replied, with an indulgent scorn, "my marriage was a very incomplete affair."

"And yet you were fond of your husband?"

"You have hit upon the exact word; I was fond of him, yes, just as I was fond of my grandmother, and the house that I was born in, and my old nurse. Oh, I was fond of him, and we were counted a very happy couple. But I have sometimes thought that a woman's nature is like a great house full of rooms: there is the hall, through which everyone passes in going in and out; the drawing-room, where one receives formal visits; the sitting-room, where the members of the family come and go as they list; but beyond that, far beyond, are other rooms, the handles of whose doors perhaps are never turned; no one knows the way to them, no one knows whither they lead; and in the innermost room, the holy of holies, the soul sits alone and waits for a footstep that never comes."

"And your husband," asked the Spirit, after a pause, "never got beyond the family sitting-room?"

"Never," she returned, impatiently; "and the worst of it was that he was quite content to remain there. He thought it perfectly beautiful, and sometimes, when he was admiring its commonplace furniture, insignificant as the chairs and tables of a hotel parlor, I felt like crying out to him: 'Fool, will you never guess that close at hand are rooms full of treasures and wonders, such as the eye of man hath not seen, rooms that no step has crossed, but that might be yours to live in, could you but find the handle of the door?'"

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"Then," the Spirit continued, "those moments of which you lately spoke, which seemed to come to you like scattered hints of the fulness of life, were not shared with your husband?"

"Oh, no—never. He was different. His boots creaked, and he always slammed the door when he went out, and he never read anything but railway novels and the sporting advertisements in the papers—and—and, in short, we never understood each other in the least."

"To what influence, then, did you owe those exquisite sensations?"

"I can hardly tell. Sometimes to the perfume of a flower; sometimes to a verse of Dante or of Shakespeare; sometimes to a picture or a sunset, or to one of those calm days at sea, when one seems to be lying in the hollow of a blue pearl; sometimes, but rarely, to a word spoken by someone who chanced to give utterance, at the right moment, to what I felt but could not express."

"Someone whom you loved?" asked the Spirit.

"I never loved anyone, in that way," she said, rather sadly, "nor was I thinking of any one person when I spoke, but of two or three who, by touching for an instant upon a certain chord of my being, had called forth a single note of that strange melody which seemed sleeping in my soul. It has seldom happened, however, that I have owed such feelings to people; and no one ever gave me a moment of such happiness as it was my lot to feel one evening in the Church of Or San Michele, in Florence."

"Tell me about it," said the Spirit.

"It was near sunset on a rainy spring afternoon in Easter week. The clouds had vanished, dispersed by a sudden wind, and as we entered the church the fiery panes of the high windows shone out like lamps through the dusk. A priest was at the high altar, his white cope a livid spot in the incense-laden obscurity, the light of the candles flickering up and down like fireflies about his head; a few people knelt near by. We stole behind them and sat down on a bench close to the tabernacle of Orcagna.

"Strange to say, though Florence was not new to me, I had never been in the church before; and in that magical light I saw for the first time the inlaid steps, the fluted columns, the sculptured bas-reliefs and canopy of the marvellous shrine. The marble, worn and mellowed by the subtle hand of time, took on an unspeakable rosy hue, suggestive in some remote way of the honey-colored columns of the Parthenon, but more mystic, more complex, a color not born of the sun's inveterate kiss, but made up of cryptal twilight, and the flame of candles upon martyrs' tombs, and gleams of sunset through symbolic panes of chrysoprase and ruby; such a light as illumines the missals in the library of Siena, or burns like a hidden fire through the Madonna of Gian Bellini in the Church of the Redeemer, at Venice; the light of the Middle Ages, richer, more solemn, more significant than the limpid sunshine of Greece.

"The church was silent, but for the wail of the priest and the occasional scraping of a chair against the floor, and as I sat there, bathed in that light, absorbed in rapt contemplation of the marble miracle which rose before me, cunningly wrought as a casket of ivory and enriched with jewel-like incrustations and tarnished gleams of gold, I felt myself borne onward along a mighty current, whose source seemed to be in the very beginning of things, and whose tremendous waters gathered as they went all the mingled streams of human passion and endeavor. Life in all its varied manifestations of beauty and strangeness seemed weaving a rhythmical dance around me as I moved, and wherever the spirit of man had passed I knew that my foot had once been familiar.

"As I gazed, the mediæval bosses of the tabernacle of Orcagna seemed to melt and flow into their primal forms, so that the folded lotus of the Nile and the Greek acanthus were braided with the runic knots and fish-tailed monsters of the North, and all the plastic terror and beauty born of man's hand from the Ganges to the Baltic quivered and mingled in Orcagna's apotheosis of Mary. And so the river bore me on, past the alien face of antique civil-

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izations and the familiar wonders of Greece, till I swam upon the fiercely rushing tide of the Middle Ages, with its swirling eddies of passion, its heaven-reflecting pools of poetry and art; I heard the rhythmic blow of the craftsmen's hammers in the goldsmiths' workshops and on the walls of churches, the party-cries of armed factions in the narrow streets, the organ-roll of Dante's verse, the crackle of the fagots around Arnold of Brescia, the twitter of the swallows to which St. Francis preached, the laughter of the ladies listening on the hillside to the quips of the Decameron, while plague-struck Florence howled beneath them — all this and much more I heard, joined in strange unison with voices earlier and more remote, fierce, passionate, or tender, yet subdued to such awful harmony that I thought of the song that the morning stars sang together and felt as though it were sounding in my ears. My heart beat to suffocation, the tears burned my lids, the joy, the mystery of it seemed too intolerable to be borne. I could not understand even then the words of the song; but I knew that if there had been someone at my side who could have heard it with me, we might have found the key to it together.

"I turned to my husband, who was sitting beside me in an attitude of patient dejection, gazing into the bottom of his hat; but at that moment he rose, and stretching his stiffened legs, said, mildly: 'Hadn't we better be going? There doesn't seem to be much to see here, and you know the table d'hôte dinner is at half-past six o'clock.'"

Her recital ended, there was an interval of silence; then the Spirit of Life said: "There is a compensation in store for such needs as you have expressed."

"Oh, then you *do* understand?" she exclaimed. "Tell me what compensation, I entreat you!"

"It is ordained," the Spirit answered, "that every soul which seeks in vain on earth for a kindred soul to whom it can lay bare its inmost being shall find that soul here and be united to it for eternity."

A glad cry broke from her lips. "Ah, shall I find him at last?" she cried, exultant.

"He is here," said the Spirit of Life.

She looked up and saw that a man stood near whose soul (for in that unwonted light she seemed to see his soul more clearly than his face) drew her toward him with an invincible force.

"Are you really he?" she murmured.

"I am he," he answered.

She laid her hand in his and drew him toward the parapet which overhung the valley.

"Shall we go down together," she asked him, "into that marvellous country; shall we see it together, as if with the self-same eyes, and tell each other in the same words all that we think and feel?"

"So," he replied, "have I hoped and dreamed."

"What?" she asked, with rising joy. "Then you, too, have looked for me?"

"All my life."

"How wonderful! And did you never, never find anyone in the other world who understood you?"

"Not wholly—not as you and I understand each other."

"Then you feel it, too? Oh, I am happy," she sighed.

They stood, hand in hand, looking down over the parapet upon the shimmering landscape which stretched forth beneath them into sapphirine space, and the Spirit of Life, who kept watch near the threshold, heard now and then a floating fragment of their talk blown backward like the stray swallows which the wind sometimes separates from their migratory tribe.

"Did you never feel at sunset——"

"Ah, yes; but I never heard anyone else say so. Did you?"

"Do you remember that line in the third canto of the 'Inferno?'"

"Ah, that line—my favorite always. Is it possible——"

"You know the stooping Victory in the frieze of the Nike Apteros?"

"You mean the one who is tying her sandal? Then you have noticed, too, that all Botticelli and Mantegna are dormant in those flying folds of her drapery?"

"After a storm in autumn have you never seen——"

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"Yes, it is curious how certain flowers suggest certain painters—the perfume of the carnation, Leonardo; that of the rose, Titian; the tuberose, Crivelli——"

"I never supposed that anyone else had noticed it."

"Have you never thought——"

"Oh, yes, often and often; but I never dreamed that anyone else had."

"But surely you must have felt——"

"Oh, yes, yes; and you, too——"

"How beautiful! How strange——"

Their voices rose and fell, like the murmur of two fountains answering each other across a garden full of flowers. At length, with a certain tender impatience, he turned to her and said: "Love, why should we linger here? All eternity lies before us. Let us go down into that beautiful country together and make a home for ourselves on some blue hill above the shining river."

As he spoke, the hand she had forgotten in his was suddenly withdrawn, and he felt that a cloud was passing over the radiance of her soul.

"A home," she repeated, slowly, "a home for you and me to live in for all eternity?"

"Why not, love? Am I not the soul that yours has sought?"

"Y-yes — yes, I know — but, don't you see, home would not be like home to me, unless——"

"Unless?" he wonderingly repeated.

She did not answer, but she thought to herself, with an impulse of whimsical inconsistency, "Unless you slammed the door and wore creaking boots."

But he had recovered his hold upon her hand, and by imperceptible degrees was leading her toward the shining steps which descended to the valley.

"Come, O my soul's soul," he passionately implored; "why delay a moment? Surely you feel, as I do, that eternity itself is too short to hold such bliss as ours. It seems to me that I can see our home already. Have I not always seen it in my dreams? It is white, love, is it not, with polished columns, and a sculptured cornice against the blue? Groves of laurel and oleander and thickets of roses surround it; but from the terrace where we walk at sunset, the eye looks out over woodlands and cool meadows where, deep-bowered under ancient boughs, a stream goes delicately toward the river. Indoors our favorite pictures hang upon the walls and the rooms are lined with books. Think, dear, at last we shall have time to read them all. With which shall we begin? Come, help me to choose. Shall it be 'Faust' or the 'Vita Nuova,' the 'Tempest' or 'Les Caprices de Marianne,' or the thirty-first canto of the 'Paradise,' or 'Epipsychidion' or 'Lycidas'? Tell me, dear, which one?"

As he spoke he saw the answer trembling joyously upon her lips; but it died in the ensuing silence, and she stood motionless, resisting the persuasion of his hand.

"What is it?" he entreated.

"Wait a moment," she said, with a strange hesitation in her voice. "Tell me first, are you quite sure of yourself? Is there no one on earth whom you sometimes remember?"

"Not since I have seen you," he replied; for, being a man, he had indeed forgotten.

Still she stood motionless, and he saw that the shadow deepened on her soul.

"Surely, love," he rebuked her, "it was not that which troubled you? For my part I have walked through Lethe. The past has melted like a cloud before the moon. I never lived until I saw you."

She made no answer to his pleadings, but at length, rousing herself with a visible effort, she turned away from him and moved toward the Spirit of Life, who still stood near the threshold.

"I want to ask you a question," she said, in a troubled voice.

"Ask," said the Spirit.

"A little while ago," she began, slowly, "you told me that every soul which has not found a kindred soul on earth is destined to find one here."

"And have you not found one?" asked the Spirit.

"Yes; but will it be so with my husband's soul also?"

"No," answered the Spirit of Life, "for your husband imagined that he had found his soul's mate on earth in

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you; and for such delusions eternity itself contains no cure."

She gave a little cry. Was it of disappointment or triumph?

"Then — then what will happen to him when he comes here?"

"That I cannot tell you. Some field of activity and happiness he will doubtless find, in due measure to his capacity for being active and happy."

She interrupted, almost angrily: "He will never be happy without me."

"Do not be too sure of that," said the Spirit.

She took no notice of this, and the Spirit continued: "He will not understand you here any better than he did on earth."

"No matter," she said; "I shall be the only sufferer, for he always thought that he understood me."

"His boots will creak just as much as ever——"

"No matter."

"And he will slam the door——"

"Very likely."

"And continue to read railway novels——"

She interposed, impatiently: "Many men do worse than that."

"But you said just now," said the Spirit, "that you did not love him."

"True," she answered, simply; "but don't you understand that I shouldn't feel at home without him? It is all very well for a week or two—but for eternity! After all, I never minded the creaking of his boots, except when my head ached, and I don't suppose it will ache *here;* and he was always so sorry when he had slammed the door, only he never *could* remember not to. Besides, no one else would know how to look after him, he is so helpless. His inkstand would never be filled, and he would always be out of stamps and visiting-cards. He would never remember to have his umbrella re-covered, or to ask the price of anything before he bought it. Why, he wouldn't even know what novels to read. I always had to choose the kind he liked, with a murder or a forgery and a successful detective."

She turned abruptly to her kindred soul, who stood listening with a mien of wonder and dismay.

"Don't you see," she said, "that I can't possibly go with you?"

"But what do you intend to do?" asked the Spirit of Life.

"What do I intend to do?" she returned, indignantly. "Why, I mean to wait for my husband, of course. If he had come here first *he* would have waited for me for years and years; and it would break his heart not to find me here when he comes." She pointed with a contemptuous gesture to the magic vision of hill and vale sloping away to the translucent mountains. "He wouldn't give a fig for all that," she said, "if he didn't find me here."

"But consider," warned the Spirit, "that you are now choosing for eternity. It is a solemn moment."

"Choosing!" she said, with a half-sad smile. "Do you still keep up here that old fiction about choosing? I should have thought that *you* knew better than that. How can I help myself? He will expect to find me here when he comes, and he would never believe you if you told him that I had gone away with someone else—never, never."

"So be it," said the Spirit. "Here, as on earth, each one must decide for himself."

She turned to her kindred soul and looked at him gently, almost wistfully. "I am sorry," she said. "I should have liked to talk with you again; but you will understand, I know, and I dare say you will find someone else a great deal cleverer——"

And without pausing to hear his answer she waved him a swift farewell and turned back toward the threshold.

"Will my husband come soon?" she asked the Spirit of Life.

"That you are not destined to know," the Spirit replied.

"No matter," she said, cheerfully; "I have all eternity to wait in."

And still seated alone on the threshold, she listens for the creaking of his boots.

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THE SOURCE.

By Henry van Dyke.

I.

IN the middle of the land that is called by its inhabitants Koorma, and by strangers the Land of the Half-forgotten, I was toiling all day long through heavy sand and grass as hard as wire; and suddenly, toward evening, I came upon a small, fair city at the edge of the plain, where the desert made a bay in the shadow of the mountains.

Now this bay was not yellow and hot and dry, like the region through which I had passed, neither was it covered with great billows of sand. But the surface of it was smooth and green; and as the winds of twilight breathed across it they were followed by soft waves of verdure, with silvery turnings of the under sides of many leaves, like ripples on a quiet harbor. There were fields of corn, filled with silken rustling, and vineyards with long rows of trimmed maple-trees standing each one like an emerald goblet wreathed with vines, and flower-gardens as bright as if the earth had been embroidered with threads of blue and scarlet and gold, and olive-orchards frosted over with delicate and fragrant blossoms. Red-roofed cottages were scattered everywhere through the sea of greenery, and in the centre, like a white ship surrounded by a flock of little boats, rested the shining city.

I wondered greatly how this beauty had come into being on the border of the desert. Passing through the fields and gardens and orchards, I found that they were all encircled and lined with channels full of running water; and as I followed up the smaller channels until they came to a larger stream, and walked on beside it, still going upward, it guided me into the midst of the city, where I saw a sweet, merry river flowing through the main street, with abundance of water and a very pleasant sound. There were houses and shops and lofty palaces and all that makes a city, but the life and joy of all, and the one thing that I remember best, was the river. For in the open squares there were marble pools where the children might bathe and play; at the corners of the streets and on the sides of the houses there were fountains for the drawing of water; at every crossing a stream was turned aside to run out to the vineyards; and all were fed from the river.

There were but few people in the streets, and none of the older folk from whom I might ask counsel or a lodging; so I stood and knocked at the door of a house. It was opened by an old man, who greeted me with kindness and bade me enter as his guest. After much courteous entertainment, and when supper was ended, the freedom of his manner and something of singular attractiveness in his countenance led me to tell him of my strange journeyings in the land of Koorma (which are written in the record of the Errors of the Sons of Wisdom who seek the Blue Flower), and to inquire of him the name and the story of his city and the cause of the river which made it glad.

"My son," he answered, "this is the city which was called Ablis, that is to say, Forsaken. For long ago men lived here, and the river made their fields fertile, and their dwellings were full of plenty and peace. But because of many evil things which have been half forgotten, the river was turned aside, or else it was dried up at its spring in the high place among the mountains, so that the water flowed down no more. The channels and the trenches and the marble pools and the basins beside the houses remained, but they were empty. So the gardens withered; the fields were barren; the city was desolate; and in the broken cisterns there was scanty water.

"Then there came one from a distant country who was very sorrowful to see the desolation. He told the people that it was vain to dig new cisterns and to keep the channels and trenches clean; for the water had come only from above.

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The Source must be found again and reopened. The river would not flow unless they traced it back to the spring, and visited it continually, and offered prayers and praises beside it without ceasing. Then the spring would rise to an outpouring, and the water would run down plentifully to make the gardens blossom and the city rejoice.

"So he went forth to open the fountain; but there were few that went with him, for he was a poor man of lowly aspect, and the path upward was steep and rough. But his companions saw that as he climbed among the rocks little streams of water gushed from his footsteps, and pools began to gather in the old dry places of the river-bed. He went more swiftly than they could follow him, and at length he passed out of their sight. A little farther on they came to the rising of the river and there, beside the overflowing spring, they found their leader lying dead."

"That was a strange thing," I cried, "and very pitiful. Tell me how it came to pass, and what was the meaning of it."

"I cannot tell the whole of the meaning," replied the old man, after a little pause, "for it was many years ago. But this poor man had many enemies in the city, chiefly among the makers of cisterns, who hated him for his words. I believe that they went out after him secretly and slew him. But his followers came back to the city; and as they came the river began to run down very gently after them. They returned to the Source day by day, bringing others with them; for they said that their leader was really alive again, though the form of his life had changed, and that he met them in that high place while they remembered him and prayed and sang songs of praise. More and more the people learned to go with them, and the path grew easier so that it seemed very short. The more the Source was revisited the more abundant it became and the more it filled the river. All the channels and the basins were supplied with water, and men made new channels which were also filled. Some of those who were diggers of trenches and hewers of cisterns said that it was their work which had wrought the change. But the wisest and best among the people knew that it all came from the Source, and they taught that if it should ever again be forgotten and left unvisited the river would fail again and desolation return. So every day from the gardens and orchards and the streets of the city men and women and children have gone up the mountain-path with singing, to rejoice beside the spring from which the river flows and to remember the one who opened it. We call it the River Carita; and the name of the city is no more Ablis, but Salame, which is Peace; and the name of him who died to give us the spring is so dear that we speak it only when we pray.

"But there are many things yet to learn about our city, and some that seem dark and cast a shadow on my thoughts. Therefore, my son, I bid you to be my guest, for there is a room in my house for the stranger; and to-morrow and on the following days you shall see how life goes with us, and read, if you can, the secret of the city."

That night I slept well, as one who has heard a pleasant tale, with the murmur of running water woven through many dreams; and the next day I went out early into the streets, for I was curious to see the manner of the visitation of the Source.

Already the people were coming forth and turning their steps upward in the mountain-path beside the river. Some of them went alone, swiftly and in silence; others were in groups of two or three, talking as they went; others were in larger companies, and they sang together very gladly and sweetly. But there were many people who remained working in their fields or in their houses, or stayed talking on the corners of the streets. Therefore I joined myself to one of the men who walked alone and asked him why all the people did not go to the spring, since the life of the city depended upon it, and whether, perhaps, the way was so long and so hard that none but the strongest could undertake it.

"Sir," said he, "I perceive that you are a stranger, for the way is both short and easy, so that the children are those who most delight in it; and if a man were in great haste he could go there and return in a few moments.

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But of those who remain behind, some are the busy ones who must visit the fountain at another hour; and some are the careless ones who take life as it comes and never think where it comes from; and some are those who do not believe in the Source and will hear nothing about it."

"How can that be?" I said; "do they not drink of the water, and does it not make their fields green?"

"It is true," he said; "but these men have made wells close by the river, and they say that these wells fill themselves; and they have digged channels through their gardens, and they say that these channels would always have water in them even though the spring should cease to flow. Some of them say also that it is an unworthy thing to drink from a spring that another has opened, and that every man ought to find a new spring for himself; so they spend the hour of the visitation, and many more, in searching among the mountains where there is no path."

While I wondered over this, we kept on in the way. There was already quite a throng of people all going in the same direction. And when we came to the Source, which flowed from an opening in a cliff, almost like a chamber hewn in the rock, and made a little garden of wild flowers around it as it fell, I heard the music of many voices and the beautiful name of him who had given his life to find the forgotten spring.

Then we came down again, singly and in groups, following the river. It seemed already more bright and full and joyous. As we passed through the gardens I saw men turning aside to make new channels through fields which were not yet cultivated. And as we entered the city I saw the wheels of the mills that ground the corn whirling more swiftly, and the maidens coming with their pitchers to draw from the brimming basins at the street corners, and the children laughing because the marble pools were so full that they could swim in them. There was plenty of water everywhere.

For many weeks I stayed in the city of Salame, going up the mountain-path in the morning, and returning to the day of work and the evening of play. For the fair-eyed little granddaughter of the old man with whom I lodged led me out to his fields where toil was easy in the shadow of the vines and among the ripening corn; and at sunset she drew me to happy games of youths and children in the open squares, in which I joined as one who is learning for the first time what it means to be young. I found also many friends among the people of the city, not only among those who walked together in the visitation of the Source, but also among those who remained behind, for many of them were kind and generous, faithful in their work, and very pleasant in their conversation.

But I heard many things that troubled me, and came to understand what the old man had said of the shadow on his thoughts. For there were some in the city who said that the hours of visitation were wasted, and that it would be better to employ the time in gathering the dew that sometimes fell on the wire-grass of the desert, or in sinking wells along the edge of the mountain. Others had newly come to the city and were teaching that there was no Source, and that the story of the poor man who reopened it was a fable, and that the hours of visitation were only hours of dreaming. There were many who believed them, and many more who said that it did not matter whether their words were true or false, and that it was of small moment whether men went to visit the fountain or not, provided only that they worked in the gardens and kept the marble pools and basins in repair and opened new canals through the fields, since there always had been and there always would be plenty of water.

As I listened to these sayings it seemed to me doubtful what the end of the city would be. And while this doubt was yet heavy upon me, I heard the silent call which compels the untaught Sons of Wisdom to their wanderings. So I bade farewell to the old man in whose house I had learned to love the hour of visitation and the Source and the name of him who opened it, and I kissed the young child who had taken me by the hand, and went forth

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sadly from the land of Koorma into other lands where also the Blue Flower may be sought but never found.

II.

In the Book of the Voyage without a Harbor is written the record of the travelling years which passed before I came back again to seek the city of Salame.

It was not easy to find, for as I looked from a distant shoulder of the hills for the little bay full of greenery, it was not to be seen. There was only a white town shining far off against the gray mountains, like a flake of mica in a cleft of the rocks. Then I slept that night full of care on the hillside, and, rising before dawn, came down in the early morning toward the city.

The fields were lying parched and brown under the sunrise, and great cracks gaped in the earth as if it were thirsty. The trenches and channels were still there, but there was no water in them; and through the ragged fringes of the yellow vineyards I heard, instead of the cheerful songs of the vintagers, the creaking of dry windlasses and the hoarse throb of the pumps in sunken wells. The girdle of gardens had shrunk like a wreath of withered flowers, and all the bright embroidery of earth was faded to a sullen gray.

At the foot of an ancient, leafless olive-tree I saw a group of people kneeling around a newly opened well. I asked a man who was digging beside the dusty path what this might mean. He straightened himself for a moment, wiping the sweat from his brow, and answered, sullenly, "They are worshipping the windlass: how else should they bring water into their fields?" Then he fell furiously to digging again, and I passed on into the city.

There was no sound of murmuring streams in the streets, and down the main bed of the river I saw only a few shallow puddles, joined together by a slowly trickling thread. Even these were fenced and guarded so that no one might come near to them, and there was a man going among the houses with water-skins on his shoulder, crying "Water! Water!"

The marble pools in the open squares were empty; and at one of them there was a crowd looking at a man who was being beaten with rods. A bystander told me that the officers of the city had ordered him to be punished because he had said that the pools and the basins and the channels were not all of pure marble, without a flaw. "For this," said he, "is the evil doctrine that has come in to take away the glory of our city, and because of this the water has failed."

"It is a sad change," I answered, "and doubtless they who have caused it should suffer more than others. But can you tell me at what hour and in what manner the people now observe the visitation of the Source?"

He looked curiously at me and replied: "I do not understand you. There is no visitation save the inspection of the cisterns and the wells which the syndics of the city, whom we call the Princes of Water, carry on daily at every hour. What source is this of which you speak?"

So I went on through the street, where all the passers-by seemed in haste and wore weary countenances, until I came to the house where I had lodged. There was a little basin here against the wall, with a slender stream of water still flowing into it, and a group of children standing near with their pitchers, waiting to fill them.

The door of the house was closed; but when I knocked, it opened and a maiden came forth. She was pale and sad in aspect, but a light of joy dawned over the snow of her face, and I knew by the youth in her eyes that it was the child who had walked with me through the vineyards long ago.

With both hands she welcomed me, saying: "You are expected. It is the hour of visitation, let us go together to the fountain."

Then we went alone through the busy and weary multitudes of the city toward the mountain-path. So forsaken was it and so covered with stones and overgrown with wire-grass that I could not have found it but for her guidance. But as we climbed upward the air grew clearer, and more sweet, and I questioned her of the things that had come to pass in my absence. I asked her of

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DRAWN BY J. R. WEGUELIN. ENGRAVED BY E. H. DEL'ORME.

"The fair-eyed little granddaughter of the old man with whom I lodged led me out to his fields."
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the kind old man who had taken me into his house when I came as a stranger. She said, softly, "He is dead."

"And where are the men and women, his friends, who once thronged this pathway? Are they also dead?"

"They also are dead."

"But where are the younger ones who sang here so gladly as they marched upward? Surely they are living?"

"They have forgotten."

"Where then are the young children whose fathers taught them this way and bade them remember it. Have they forgotten?"

"They have forgotten."

"But why have you alone kept the hour of visitation? Why have you not turned back with your companions? How have you walked here solitary, day after day?"

She turned to me with a divine regard, and laying her hand gently over mine, she said, "I remember always."

Then I thought I saw a few wild flowers blossoming beside the path.

We drew near to the Source, and entered into the chamber hewn in the rock. She kneeled and bent over the sleeping spring. She murmured again and again the beautiful name of him who had died to find it. Her voice repeated the song that had once been sung by many voices. Her tears fell softly on the spring, and as they fell it seemed as if the water stirred and rose to meet her bending face, and when she looked up it was as if the dew had fallen on a flower.

We came very slowly down the path along the river Carita, and rested often beside it, for surely, I thought, the rising of the spring had sent a little more water down its dry bed, and some of it must flow on to the city. So it was almost evening when we came back to the streets. The people were hurrying to and fro, for it was the day before the choosing of new Princes of Water; and there was much dispute about them, and strife over the building of new cisterns to hold the stores of rain which might fall in the next year. But none cared for us, as we passed by like strangers, and we came unnoticed to the door of the house.

Then a great desire of love and sorrow moved within my breast, and I said to my companion, "You are the life of the city, for you alone remember. Its secret is in your heart, and your faithful keeping of the hours of visitation is the only cause why the river has not failed altogether and the curse of desolation returned. Let me stay with you, sweet soul of all the flowers that are dead, and I will cherish you forever. Together we will visit the Source every day; and we shall turn the people, by our lives and by our words, back to that which they have forgotten."

There was a smile in her eyes so deep that its meaning cannot be spoken, as she lifted my hand to her lips, and answered,

"Not so, dear love, for who can tell whether life or death will come to the city, whether its people will remember at last, or whether they will forget forever. Its lot is mine, for I was born here, and here my life is rooted. But you are of the Children of the Unquiet Wisdom, whose feet can never rest until their task of errors is completed and their lesson of wandering is learned by heart. Until then go forth, and do not forget that I shall remember always."

Behind her quiet voice I heard the silent call that compels us, and passed down the street as one walking in a dream. At the place where the path turned aside to the ruined vineyards I looked back. The low sunset made a circle of golden rays about her head and a strange twin blossom of celestial blue seemed to shine beneath her tranquil brows.

Since then I know not what has befallen the city, nor whether it is still called Salame, or once more Ablis, which is Forsaken. But if it lives at all, I know that it is because there is one there who remembers, and keeps the hour of visitation, and treads the steep way, and breathes the beautiful name over the spring.

And now that my lesson of errors is learned, and the passion of journeying has burned itself into rest, I am going back to the city and up the mountain-path again—it may be alone, or it may be in joyous company—for there, if anywhere on earth, in the eyes of her who could not forget, I shall find the Blue Flower of immortal love beside the Source of the river Carita.

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DRAWN BY J. R. WEGUELIN. ENGRAVED BY FRANK FRENCH.

"She murmured again and again the beautiful name of him who had died to find it."—Page 710.

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DRAWN BY HOWARD PYLE. ENGRAVED BY F. A. PETTIT.

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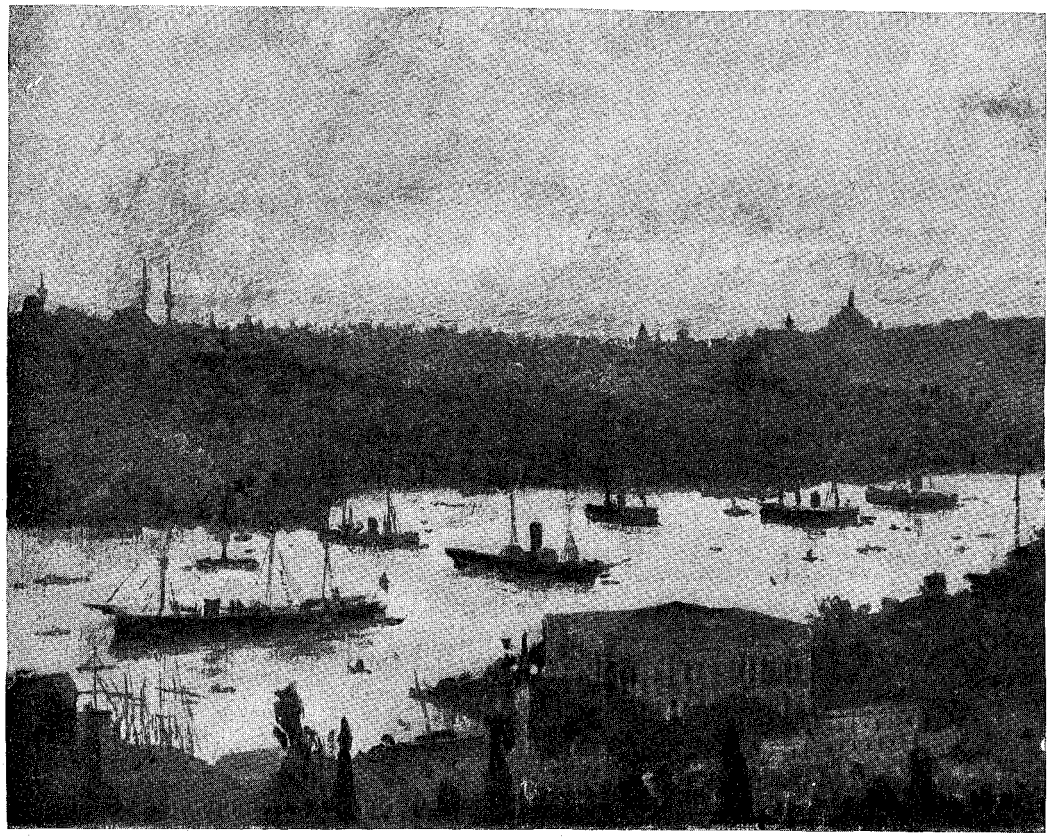

CONSTANTINOPLE.

By F. Marion Crawford.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY EDWIN LORD WEEKS.

I.

"BLESSED shall he be who shall take Constantinople," said the Prophet. Many desperate fights were fought and many valiant blows were struck in the endeavor to earn that promised blessing. Eyub, Mohammed's brave companion in arms, perished in the first attempt made by the Arabs to win the capital of the East. The Crusaders took it and got scant blessings, and did more destruction in one week than all other conquerors in twelve centuries or thereabouts; and at last came a successor and namesake of the Prophet himself, Mehemet the Fateh, he who of all others is called by the Turks the Conqueror, to this day. Though the whole great empire of the first Constantine had dwindled, in the days of the last of the name, to the narrow limits comprised within the walls of the city, a war of several years' duration was the price paid by Mehemet for the few miles of land that lie between Rumeli Hissar and St. Sophia. Impregnable castles had to be built, vast intrenchments had to be dug, and the invading fleet had to be hauled up high and dry upon the shores of the Bosphorus and taken overland upon wheels to be launched again upon the waters of the Golden Horn. And then, at the very end, the last struggle was the fiercest of all, the

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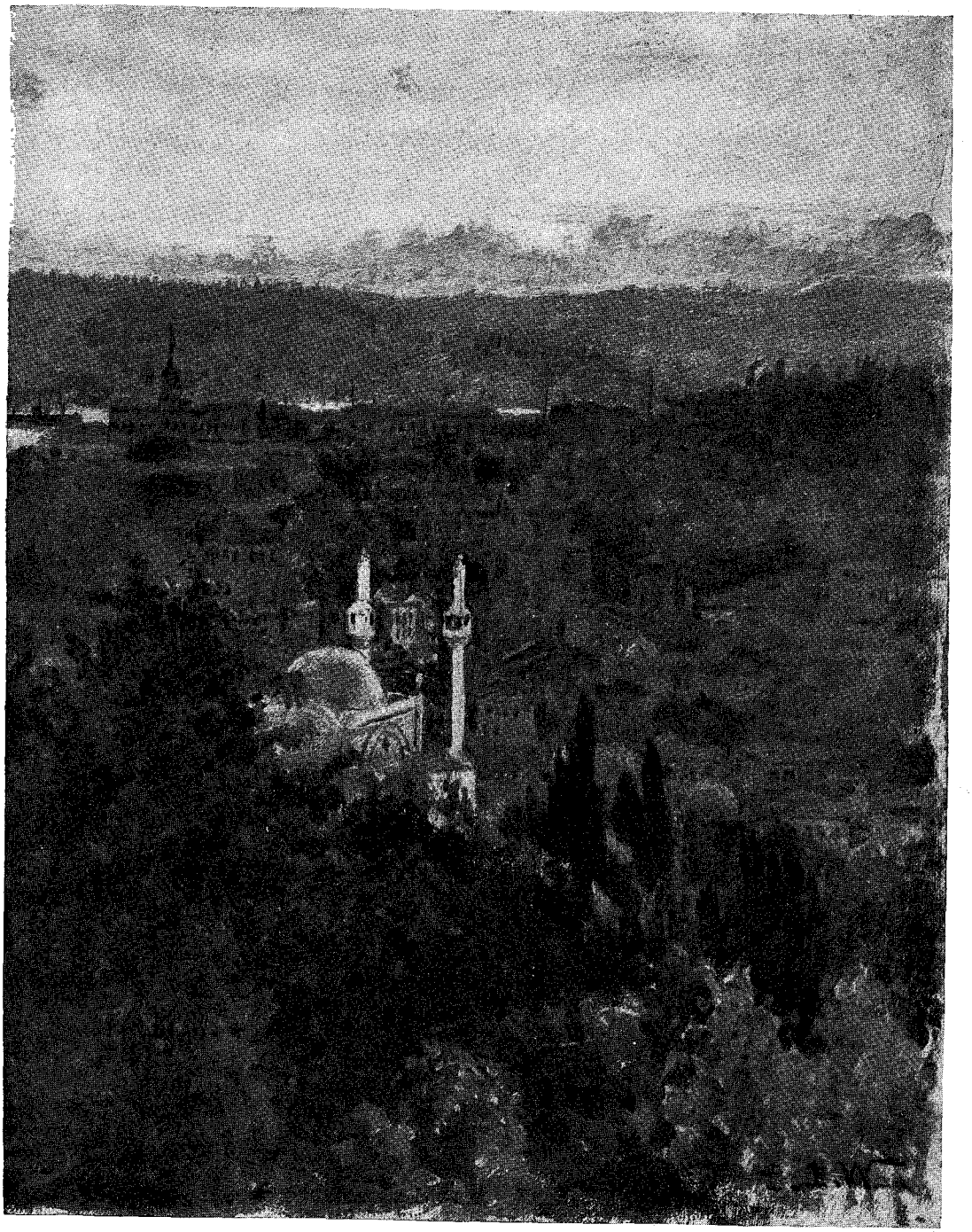

DRAWN BY EDWIN L. WEEKS.

The Golden Horn—Sunset.

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last of the emperors fell fighting desperately on foot at the gate of his own capital, and the conqueror, riding high upon the heaps of slain in the south aisle of St. Sophia, smote the pillar nearest to him with his reeking hand and left there his bloody sign manual, to be a token of his victory even to this day. So says tradition, at least; but in these latter days it is even denied that there was any massacre at all within the walls of the church, and we are confidently told that the Christians assembled therein were taken captive without bloodshed. Yet we who live in this age of light and progress, when armies are destroyed by machinery and empires spring up in a night, like mushrooms, bloom for a day like cabbage-roses, and vanish on the morrow like smoke, far too unstable to fall under one simile, we cling with an unconscious love of romance to the short, sharp, cruel deeds done in those days of faith and passion. We would rather stand in the dim aisle of the great mosque and believe for a moment that the savage warrior marked it for his own with Christian blood, than pore for hours over the elaborate schemes of mobilization which are to open the chess-play of the next nineteenth century conquest. In that one impress, if it be genuine, or in the story of it, if it be but a story, all the romance and history of the East seem to find one common centre. At the moment when that mark was made the West met the East and fell before it; in that instant, what had been sank back into the deep perspective of past dreamland and the future began to be present. The last stronghold of the old empire was stormed by the red-handed founders of the new, and the Constantinople of Constantine, of Justinian, and of the Greek emperors, had ceased to be. The rich jewel of gold and precious stones, set, as it were at the joining of three silver waters, was wrested by strong hands from Europe's neck to be the chief light in Asia's crown. The shadows of the great actors of the past, the ghost of Justinian, the passionate wraith of Theodora, the melancholy spectre of blind Belisarius, shrank out of sight into those vast halls and pillared galleries which spread beneath Stamboul, and the corse of their slaughtered descendant was still bleeding from a hundred

A Street Water-carrier.

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An Armenian.

wounds when the master of their inheritance invoked upon himself and his race the blessing promised by the Prophet of Allah, nearly eight hundred years before that day.

It has not often happened in history that a city which has been the capital of an empire during more than a thousand years has, within twenty-four hours, become the capital of another, founded and developed by a race having a totally different language, a hostile religion and traditions opposed at every point to those of the vanquished. The change after Mehemet's conquest must have been as prodigious as it was sudden, and, on the whole, what took place is greatly to the credit of the conqueror. From that day to this there has never, I believe, been anything like a persecution of Christians or Jews in Constantinople. Taking Stamboul, Pera, and Scutari together, there are probably more Christians in the capital to-day than Mussulmans, a fact which can only be attributed to principles of toleration for which the Turks have not generally received credit. The principal churches were indeed converted into mosques, and the cross was everywhere replaced by the crescent, while the innumerable paintings and mosaics representing sacred personages, saints, and angels were immediately, and in most cases permanently, hidden from

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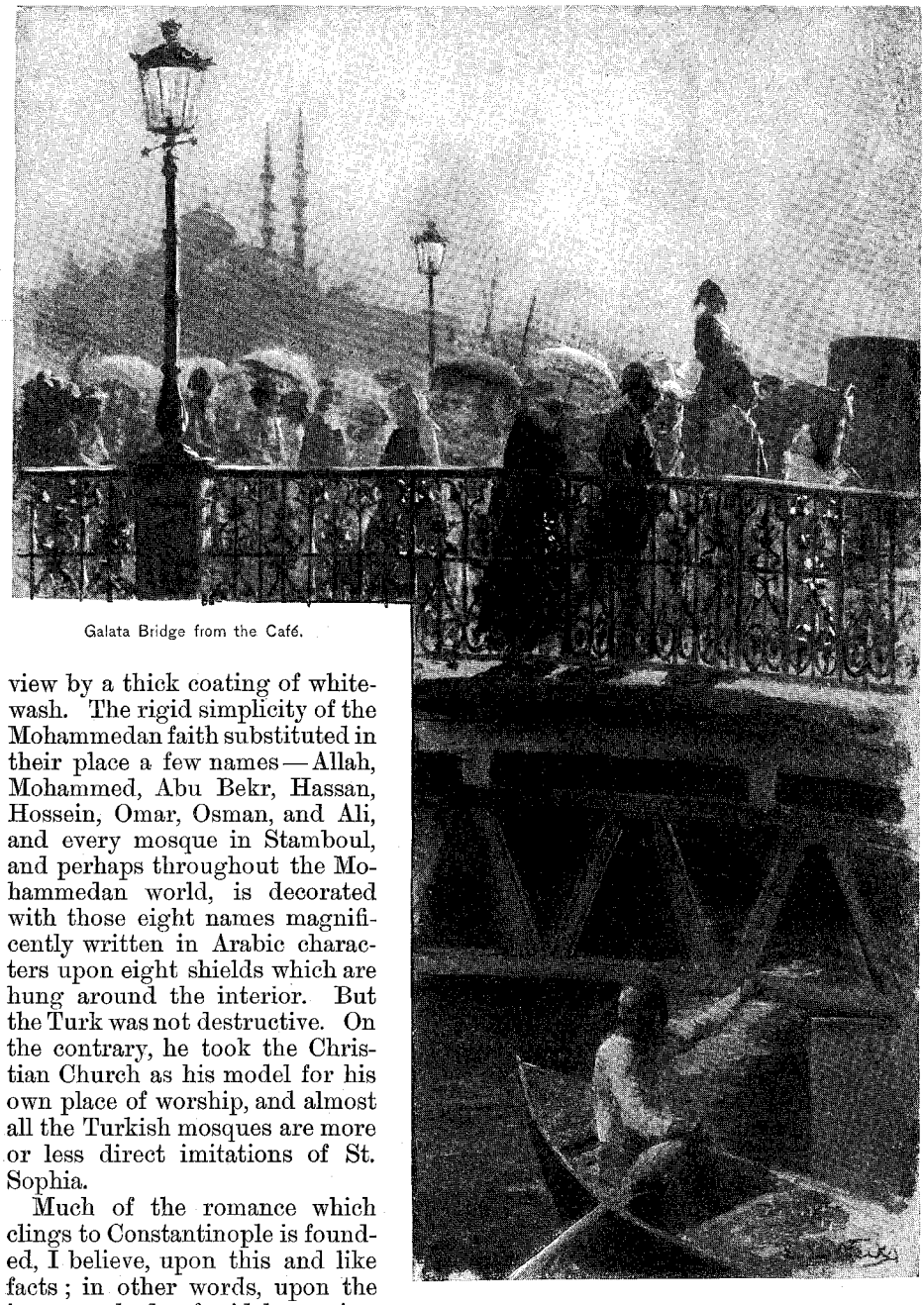

Galata Bridge from the Café.

view by a thick coating of white-wash. The rigid simplicity of the Mohammedan faith substituted in their place a few names — Allah, Mohammed, Abu Bekr, Hassan, Hossein, Omar, Osman, and Ali, and every mosque in Stamboul, and perhaps throughout the Mohammedan world, is decorated with those eight names magnificently written in Arabic characters upon eight shields which are hung around the interior. But the Turk was not destructive. On the contrary, he took the Christian Church as his model for his own place of worship, and almost all the Turkish mosques are more or less direct imitations of St. Sophia.

Much of the romance which clings to Constantinople is founded, I believe, upon this and like facts; in other words, upon the immense body of widely varying traditions inherent in every building and object which has survived the revolutions of ages. The church of St. Sophia is the type of one class, the headless Delphic serpent which stands in the Hippodrome represents another. It was a strange fatality which brought by Constantine's hand the pedestal of the Delphic Tripod to the spot which originally had been settled in obedience to the command of the Delphic oracle; there is an air of fatality also about the tradition

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Galata Bridge.

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that the conqueror who came to give a third name to the capital of the East, struck off the third head of the serpent with his battle-axe on the day he entered the city. Certainly but few objects now known to exist have been more intimately connected with the history of the world's earliest civilization than this relic of the Pythoness. It is headless, but otherwise intact. There it stands in the midst of the Hippodrome, under the blazing Eastern sun, seeming to await some new destiny yet to be. Who knows but that, before another century has run

The Cemetery.

out, strong hands may take it from its place and set it up and build a temple over it, and restore its three-fanged heads, even as they were in the days when Phœbus Apollo was master before the great Pan died? Who knows but that another conqueror may be already born, who shall tear down the shields of Allah, Mohammed, and the six Imams, and set up his golden eikons in their place. For my own part, I would rather not think of that day if so be that it is already marked upon the future's calendar. And yet, even though the Osmanli may sink again some day into the Asiatic darkness from which he came, Constantinople, under a new name, perhaps, will still and ever be the capital of the East, the golden key to Asia, the jewel coveted for many crowns, in strife for which the greedy nations will contend to the very end of time.

The most striking peculiarity of Constantinople is the immense vitality which has carried it through so many deaths. It is common to speak of Turkey as the "sick man," and to associate ideas of ruin and decay with one of the most intensely living cities in the world. But no one who has spent even twenty-four hours on either side of the Golden Horn could ever conceive of anything even distantly approaching to stagnation in the streets of Stamboul, or on Galata Bridge, or in the busy quarters of Galata itself, or of Pera above. Coming from Europe, whether from Italy or Austria, one is forcibly struck by the universal life, liveliness, and activity of the capital. There is no city in the world where so many different types of humanity meet and jostle each other and the stranger at every turn. Every nation in Europe is represented, and every nation of Asia as well. The highest and lowest types of living humanity pay their penny to the men in white who take the tolls on Galata Bridge. There is not even, as there is in so many cosmopolitan capitals, any general predominant type of feature or color. Of the Turks themselves it may be doubted whether they should be called a nation, or an agglomeration of individuals of many races who find one common bond in Islam. In the first mosque you enter at haphazard, you may see the pure Turk, often as fair and flaxen as any Norwegian, prostrating himself and repeating his prayers beside the blackest of black Africans. And as you enter the sacred place, both, at the self-same moment, will instinctively glance at your feet to see whether you have taken off your shoes or have slipped on a dusty pair of the "babuj" which will generally be offered you at the door.

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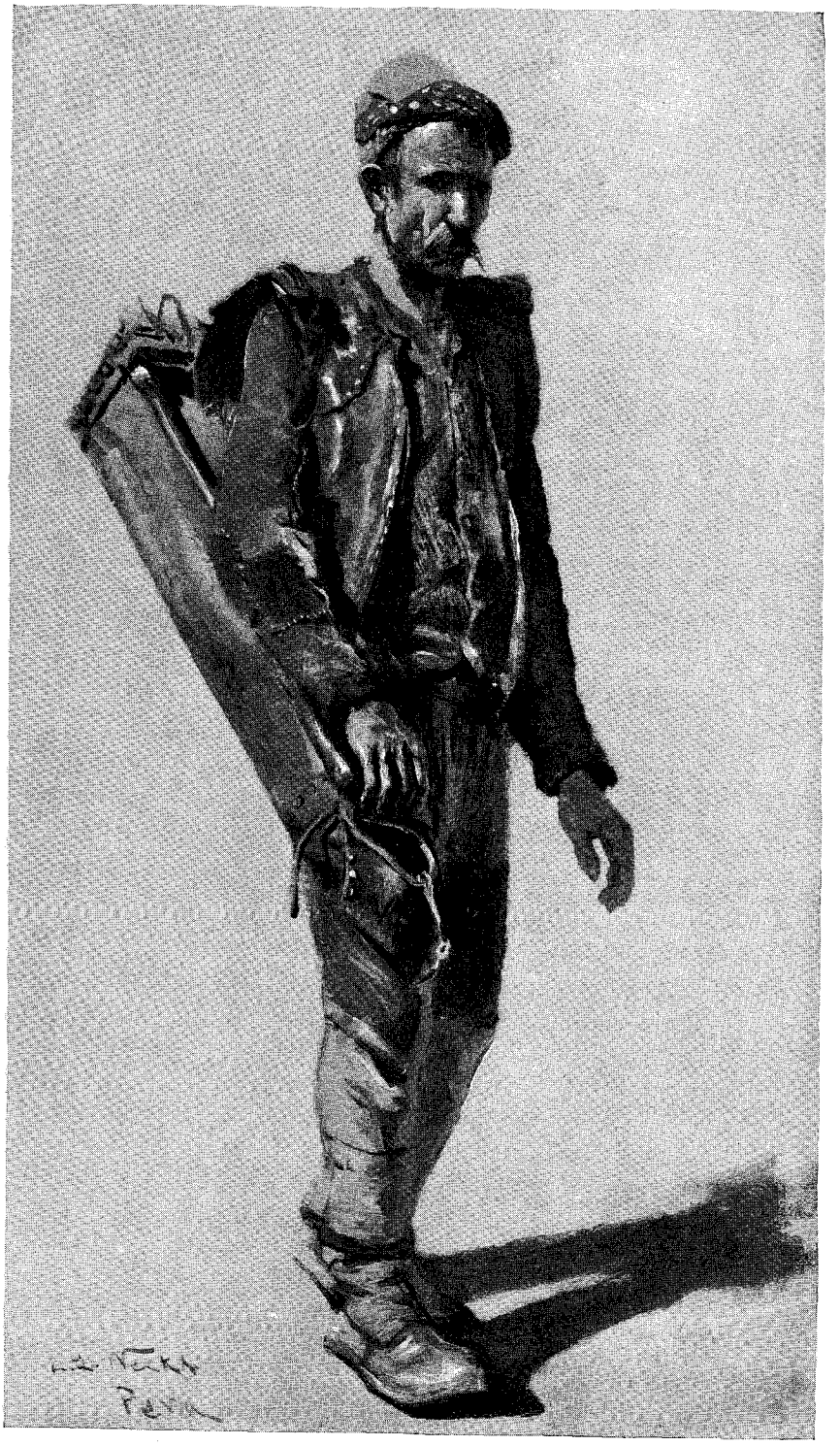

DRAWN BY EDWIN L. WEEKS.

A Water-carrier.

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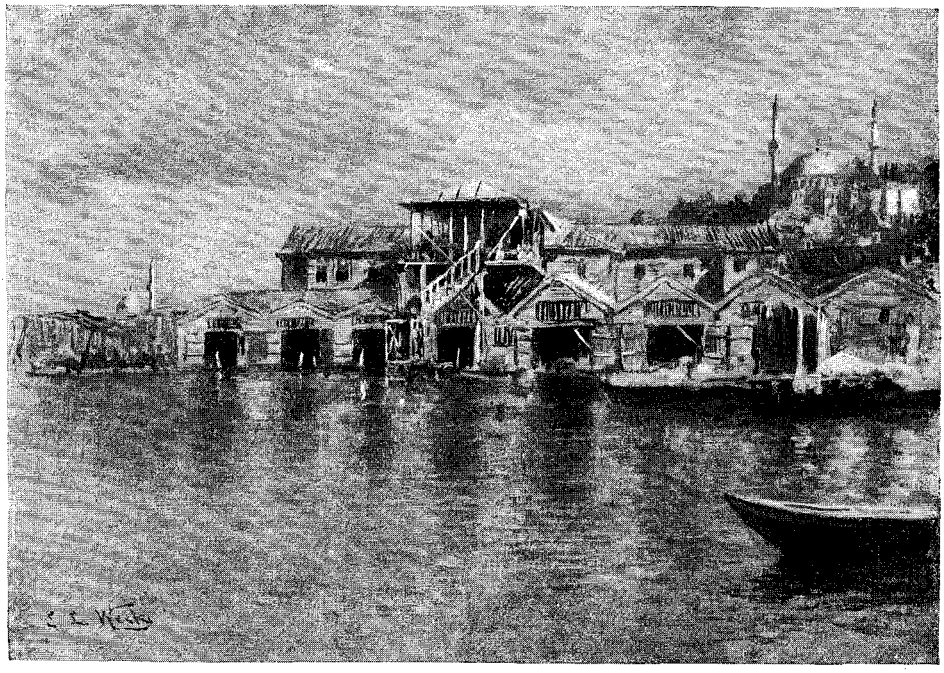

Boat-houses on the Golden Horn.

Among Mohammedans, as among Roman Catholics, the universality of common practices has something imposing in it, and you instinctively respect the Mohammedan for requiring you to reverence the spot on which he prays. And here at the very outset let me say, that after many visits and some residence in the East I am strongly inclined to believe in the original Turk—when he is to be found. Greeks, Armenians, Persians, and Africans have given him a bad name by calling themselves Turks and sometimes by misgoverning his country, but he himself is a fine fellow and belongs to the superior, dominant races of the world. He is naturally a fair man with blue eyes and of fresh complexion, well grown, uncommonly strong, and very enduring. He is sober; he is clean; and he is honest even to his own disadvantage, being by no means a match for the wily Greeks and Armenians who are perpetually fattening on his heart. There is a common proverb in the East to the effect that it takes ten Jews to cheat an Armenian, and ten Armenians to cheat one Persian. The pure Turk has no chance against such people — as little chance as they themselves would have, perhaps, against an average Hindu. That fact of itself explains the extraordinary mixture of races to be found in Constantinople. The Turk is easily cheated, and people congregate from all places in the world to profit by his simplicity. Anyone who will take the trouble to watch the streets and bazaars for any length of time, carefully bearing this point of view in mind, will be convinced of the truth of the assertion. The country produces little; its imports are not large; it is but a way-station on the sea-road between the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. If the swarms of Greeks and Armenians, who infest almost every quarter, from the highest point of Pera to the remotest corners of Stamboul in the neighborhood of the Seven Towers and the Adrianople Gate, do not rob the Turk, upon what then do they live and fatten and grow rich?

Have you ever met and known one of them who was not in pursuit of a "concession," a "grant," or the ragged end of a monopoly, and does not the Turk

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ultimately pay for all these things? Where are the foundries and the manufactories, the grain markets and the railways to support such an enormous number of men engaged in business?

There is more on Galata Bridge than appears at first sight. It is a sort of combination in itself of the Venetian Rialto and of the Florentine Ponte Vecchio. It is built on floating pontoons, having a draw in the middle which is only opened in the night, and it consists practically of three parts—a highway for foot-passengers and carriages, a narrow street of little shops and coffee-houses, and a series of steamboat piers. I have computed roughly that, taking the average of the year, twenty-eight thousand persons cross Galata Bridge every day, a calculation which includes, of course all the passengers for the Scutari and the Bosphorus ferries who pay toll in order to reach the steamers. There is a quiet spot unknown to most Europeans, where one may sit for hours in undisturbed enjoyment of coffee and cigarettes, and watch the passengers on the bridge and the arrivals and departures at one of the piers, besides observing the manners and customs of the Galata Kaikjis and the Hamals who congregate at the landing east of the bridge on the Galata side. This delightful spot is the corner of the first coffee-house on the left going toward Stamboul. It has a large, airy, and perfectly clean room, with windows on three sides through which the wind blows perpetually even on the hottest days. Take your seat in the corner nearest the bridge and nearest to Galata, order your cup of coffee—"shekerli," with sugar, or "sade" without—light your cigarette, and begin your observations. The scene is dazzling and kaleidoscopic in its variety of color and quick motion. The eye is first struck by the predominance of the fez. Hundreds of little truncated cones of vivid scarlet dart hither and thither, passing and repassing each other like a swarm of vermilion insects, all exactly alike and all at very nearly the same level. The fez was introduced as the official head-dress of Turkey by Mahmud II. known as the Reformer, who took it from the Greeks, and substituted it for the ponderous turban formerly worn in the army, and by all Government officials. It is in itself ugly except for its bright color, but it is neat, uniform, and clean, and with its long black silk tassel lends a sort of "dashing" look to the bronzed faces of officers and soldiers. But there are

A Fruit-seller.

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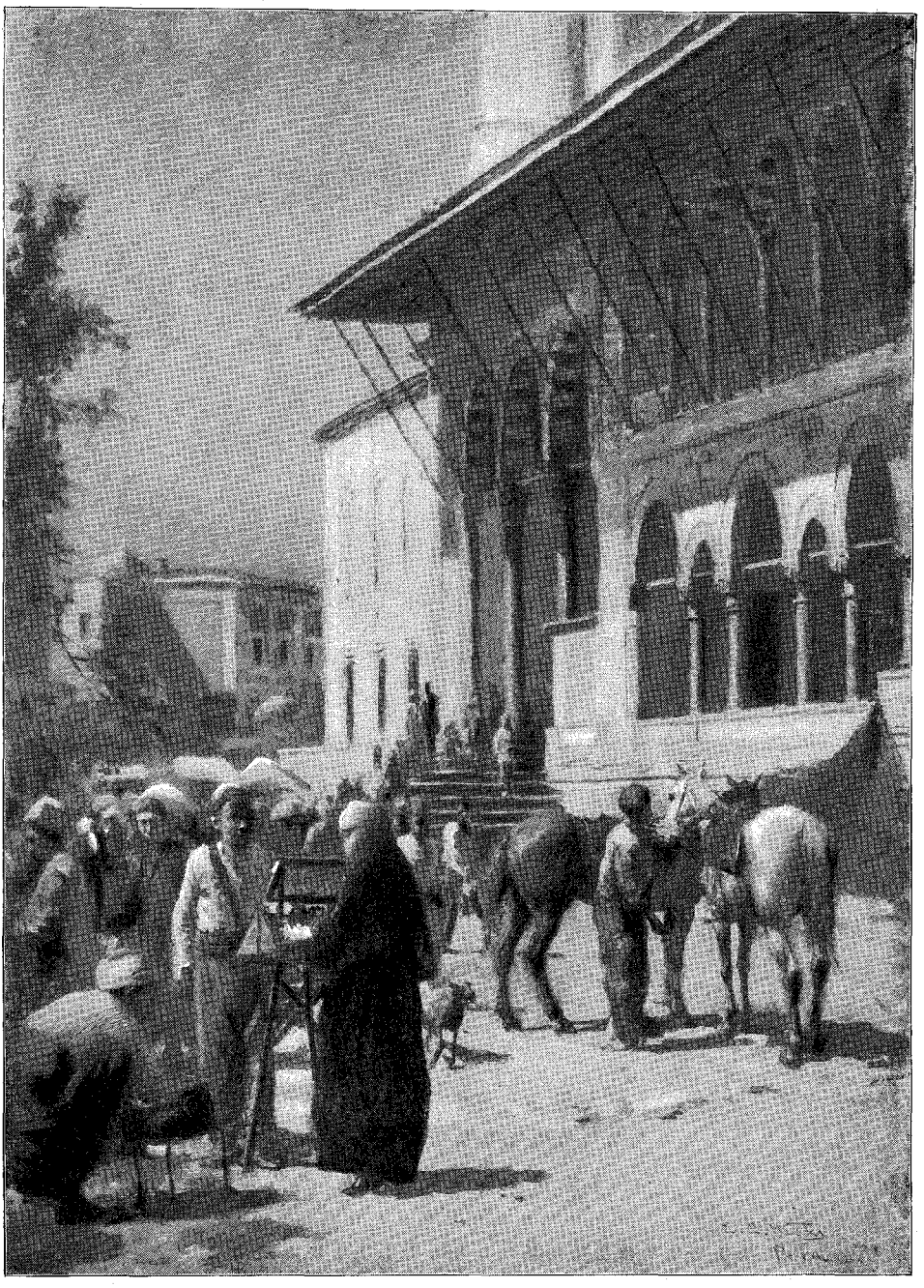

DRAWN BY EDWIN L. WEEKS.

Entrance to Seraskierat Mosque.

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turbans, too, and plenty of them, both white and green, and many of the poorer sort, such as porters, water-carriers, and sweetmeat sellers, twist a white or red rag round the fez to emphasize the fact that they are Mussulmans. The white and green turbans are distinctive of the Mollahs—men who have received the education of Mohammedan priests, though they may not necessarily exercise priestly functions. They, too, wear the Turkish dress, the flowing, tight-sleeved, scanty-cut gown of almost any color except red, open in front and disclosing the spotless shirt, the embroidered vest, the wide trousers, and the voluminous waistband. But European dress is the rule and not the exception. The military uniforms are close imitations of those in use in the German army, and the garments of the civilians are less perfect copies of what is considered fashionable in western Europe. The Mollah strides along with dignified step and graceful movement, conscious, no doubt, of the artistic superiority of his own clothes. If he has a green turban he is a descendant of the Prophet's own family, which, like that promised to Abraham of old, has become like the sands of the sea. In the great majority of cases, too, the claim to such high descent is genuine, the green badge being handed down from father to son without much possibility of its being assumed by one who has no claim to it, unless he be an emigrant from his own birthplace. The women of the family also wear some bit of green silk or other stuff in their own homes, though rarely in the street, unless it be hidden beneath the yashmak or the ferajeh — the clumsily cut overgarment which covers all women in the street from the throat to the inevitable patent leather shoes. But the yashmak is not what it was ten years ago, and has almost ceased to hide the face at all. Strict as the Sultan's ordinance is, there is not the slightest pretence of obeying it, and in the great majority of cases a thin white veil barely covers the forehead, and is but loosely drawn together under the chin. The cross-band which used to cover the nose above the eyes has entirely disappeared, or is worn only when ladies appear in public at such places as the Sweet Waters, or in their kaiks on the Golden Horn and the Bosphorus. It must be admitted that with the disuse of that old-fashioned veil, a great illusion has disappeared from the streets of Constantinople. There was something very mysterious about it. Black eyes never looked so black and deep and liquid as when seen by themselves, as it were, between two broad bands of opaque white. In those days every yashmak veiled an ideal beauty, very different from the ugliness of the pale and flaccid features which its absence now generally discloses. One is inclined to doubt whether the mirror is in common use in the harem of to-day.

But as you sit by the open window of the coffee-house, you have little time for analyzing the features or the dress of the hurrying crowd. What you see is a magnificent, inextricable confusion of moving light and sun and shade and color, a wild and almost dream-like confusion of Eastern and Western life, a startling and almost horrible contrast of magnificence and squalor; the splendid, gold-lace-bedizened adjutant on his Arab mare and the almost inconceivably wretched beggar, maimed and blind, perhaps, holding out his hand with his perpetual feeble cry, "On para," a penny; the solemn scion of the Prophet's race, green-turbaned, stately, calm; the deadly pale indifferent Turkish woman, all in white and black, and closely followed by a bright-eyed African girl even less closely veiled than her mistress; the sanctimonious Dervish in soft brown, or softer green, or steely gray, his bent head and downcast eyes surmounted by his tall cylindrical felt cap; the little strutting military cadet in smart uniform and brand-new fez, not more than twelve years old, perhaps, and closely followed by a scowling African servant who cuffs him sharply, without the slightest sign of respect, if he wanders to the right or to the left. Then, suddenly, the rumble and clatter of a splendid equipage rolling fast through the dividing crowd, bearing, it may be, some solemn, frock-coated, white-bearded, scarlet-fezzed minister of state, on his way to Selamlik, or from Yildiz Kiosk to the Sublime Porte—or else, if the carriage be a closed brough-

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am, and if there be outriders, some delicate, pale-faced, half-consumptive prince, one of the innumerable offshoots of the Imperial family. And it all surges back and forth, gleaming, glistening, and flashing, under the broad white sun against the background of blue water and pale sky and faintly outlined hills, poured out as a stream of liquid metal when the furnace is opened, and rushing, iridescent and sparkling, toward the mould, fascinating, enthralling, almost hypnotic in its effect upon the senses.

Even the fat and flabby Greek, who sits not far from you upon the leathern bench, can hardly keep his eyes from the sight, although it has been familiar to him since he was a baby. He is a cook and has bilious-looking eyes. You know that he is a cook, because he is smoking a water-pipe which, as everyone who frequents the coffee-houses in Constantinople is aware, is a form of enjoyment favored almost exclusively by the members of his profession. But even the bubbling of the water-pipe, and the constant efforts of keeping its little fire alive, cannot distract your neighbor's unhealthy yellow eyes from the enthralling spectacle of Galata Bridge at noon-day. There is nothing like it in the whole world, from San Francisco to Peking—nothing so vivid, so alive, so heterogeneous, so anomalous and so fascinating. The imagination reels at the merest attempt to fix the characteristics or guess at the lives, to evoke the poetry, the prose, or the romance, of half a score among the countless individualities that cross the field of vision at every second, streaming backward and forward like swarms of bees between the two great hives of humanity thus linked and bound together by a single narrow causeway.

I shall never forget my first impression of Constantinople. It has been my good fortune since then, to see it again and again, at every time of year, and under every possible aspect, but no subsequent picture has had either the vividness or the beauty of the first. I remember that it was in February and we steamed up the Sea of Marmora to the entrance of the Bosphorus in a heavy snow-storm. The flakes fell so thick and fast that scarcely a single building was distinctly visible. Then, suddenly, just when we were opposite St. Sophia, the snow ceased to fall, the clouds parted in a bright blue rent, and the clear morning sun, rising behind us, shone full upon Stamboul. It was a marvellous sight. Every dome and minaret and tower was frosted with thick silver. It was as though the whole beautiful city were moulded in precious metal finely chiselled and richly chased. The slender minarets shot up like rays of light, the dark cypresses were changed to silver plumes, even the Seven Towers, far on the western wall, were as white as Parian marble. Only the sea had color. A moment earlier it had been gray and dull as weather-beaten lead, but under the touch of the Eastern sun it flashed all at once to a deep opaque blue, more like lapis lazuli than sapphire.

The glory of the scene was beyond description, and, in its way, surpasses anything I have witnessed in any part of the world. A few minutes later it was gone, the wintry clouds rolled together, the light went out, snow fell again, then rain, and then more snow, and my second impression was of dismal, slushy, filthy streets, dripping eaves, marrow-biting air, and an intense longing for a comfortable room and a good fire. Perhaps the contrast has served in memory's gallery to throw the first picture into unreasonable prominence, but remembrance may have exaggerations which one does not regret.

And now, quite recently, I have seen the picture in another and very different light. I was belated in Kadi Keui on a summer evening, and being obliged to get back to Pera for the night I took a four-oared kaik. The moon was near the first quarter and shone brightly, though the weather to the northward was threatening, and there was a sharp, cool breeze over the water. Very slowly, as we made our way across, the black cloud-bank crept up to the moon until, just as we were opposite Top Kapu, the thunder-storm broke on us in full force. In an instant the night was as black as ink, and I could see nothing ahead but the dim lights of the

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bridge and the white foam of the driving squall. Astern and to starboard the red light on the so-called Leander's Tower, served to guide the oarsmen as they pulled along through the big drops of rain. Then the lightning began. At intervals of a few seconds, vivid flashes lit up both cities, Pera and Stamboul, so brightly that even at a great distance I could distinctly see the windows of the houses, the details of the architecture, and even the little low doors high up at the tops of the minarets. It was as though at each separate moment the whole city were enveloped in flames, instantly extinguished and as suddenly rekindled.

But perhaps the most characteristic view of all, and the most permanently abiding is that of Stamboul in summer when the strong, unwavering light fills every lane and alley and corner from sunrise to sunset, drinking up the shadows as heat dries moisture. Then behind the gilded gratings of Sultan Ahmed's lovely fountain the watermen are ever busy filling the little metal cups from the cool cistern for the thirsty faithful and faithless alike. Then, in the bright shade that is like the sunshine of other cities, the wretched street dogs forget to fight, and lie panting in the heat, trusting that each passer-by may be a merciful Turk, who will step aside rather than disturb them, and not a Greek or an Armenian, who will kick them half across the street rather than go a yard out of his way. Then it is pleasant to wander through the halls and passages of the Top Kapu Serai—in English, the "Cannon Gate Palace"—to spend half an hour in the exquisite little library dreaming over the marvellous portraits of the Sultans, if you are lucky enough to be trusted with the precious parchment pages. Mehemet the Conqueror, Bayezid the Mystic, Suleiman the Magnificent, Ahmed First—he of the six minarets—Mahmud the Reformer, the Slayer of the Janissaries, the introducer of the fez—these and many others have all lived and moved and had their being within the walls of the great rambling old palace, men of many strange and divers passions and ambitions, some of them voluptuous in their tastes beyond a Roman Emperor's dream of luxury, others warlike, simple, and severe, some merciful, some bloodthirsty, all despotic in theory, in fact, or in both. Here are their portraits as they looked in their rich and varied magnificence, turbaned, jewelled, and armed, fierce-looking men most of them, even when there is a trace of effeminacy in their features, for the Sultan is not only the Padishah—The King of Kings—but also the Hunkyar, the "Man Slayer." And at the entrance to the palace, between the gates, there is a dismal little room where the slaying used to be done, where many a Pasha, many a Vizier and many a Minister of State has felt the tough bow-string quietly tightening round his throat, when a few moments earlier he had dreamed of favor and of power. Down by the water's edge, too, there is a little gate about which many stories are told, legendary, perhaps, and certainly not so surely true as the historical facts connected with the Jellad Odasi—the gloomy little room—under Orta Kapu. Tradition says that through that narrow water-gate more than one rebellious beauty of the harem was carried out, sewn in a weighted sack, that her soul might expiate her follies and her body feed the fish of the Bosphorus. If you have a Greek guide, he will assure you, with every appearance of believing the story himself, that it was the custom of the earlier Sultans to torture rich Greeks into confessing the whereabouts of their hidden treasures, and then to consign their mangled remains to the sea by that same gate—a story which finds no corroboration whatever in the charters granted to Christians by the Sultans, and very little, if any, in history as told by the Christians themselves. But as for the ladies of the harem, we know very little about them, though their shadowy eyes and snowy yashmaks seem to pursue us in the still warm air through that vast deserted dwelling—and there are no portraits of them among the illuminated parchment leaves in the quite library.

There is nothing dull or commonplace about shopping or shopkeeping in the East. Every man's shop is much more literally his stronghold than the Eng-

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lishman's house is his castle, and every customer's appearance is the signal for a siege. The unconscionable length of time necessary to develop a bargain in Turkey accounts, perhaps, for the perpetual crowd in the bazaar. Whoever wishes to buy anything of which the price is not commonly known and fixed by custom, must return many times to the assault before he gets what he wants. The consequence is that where every customer comes four times instead of once to the shop where he has business, there are four times as many people in the tortuous passages and labyrinthine ways of the bazaar, as should legitimately correspond to the amount of business actually done. The process is certainly cumbrous. When you first see the object for which you are looking, you must be blind, not let your features betray by the least expression that you are interested. Next, you should ask the price of at least one hundred articles in the shop, being careful, however, not to omit the one you need, lest the omission should make the shopkeeper suspect that you want it. You will then send for coffee and say that you have not come to buy anything, but have merely made inquiries out of curiosity. A few days later come, and again ask the prices of several things. On your third visit you may allow yourself to look more closely at what you have long since mentally selected, and to offer the shopkeeper not more than one-third of what he asks. On the fourth day prepare for a final pitched battle. If you do not look unrighteously rich and have not the appearance of being a "tenderfoot," you may consider that you have done fairly well if you pay in the end about two-thirds of what was demanded, especially if you have dealt with a Turk or a Jew, avoiding anything like a Christian as you would shun the plague. But this roundabout process has compensations after all so real as to be almost attractions in themselves. Everything is mysterious in the bazaar and much is beautiful. A walled city within a walled city, and again an almost impregnable fortress within that, cut up in all directions by narrow passages, blind alleys and crossways, the whole being vaulted and roofed, and entirely lighted by countless little domes—a labyrinth Cretan in its complications, and puzzling even to those who inhabit it, crowded by a busy, jostling, motley multitude drawn together from all quarters of the globe, and filled in all its recesses to very overflowing with every production of Western civilization and Eastern art, pervaded throughout its enormous extent to the strange smell of the East, so dear by strangers and so hateful to the exiled European—rich in everything, in life and sound and gorgeous color—the "charshi" of Stamboul stands alone in the whole world as the product of three continents, Europe, Asia, and Africa, fused at one busy, central, seething point.

The centre of centres, the safe deposit, the stronghold of the Constantinople merchant, is Bezestan the "Armorer's market." The wealth in this inner sanctum is said to be enormous—coin, precious stones, jewels of all sorts, silken carpets, rich embroideries, gold, weapons, and treasures of Oriental art of every sort, are deposited here in what must seem to an ordinary European a very casual way, in deal boxes more or less strengthened with iron and furnished with by no means burglar-proof locks. And yet nothing is ever stolen from Bezestan. It has heavy gates of its own; it is opened late and closed early, and the merchants and other depositors employ numerous watchmen by night and day, according to a system which is primeval in the East, and to which the West is rapidly approaching. After expending its ingenuity for centuries upon the construction of ingenious locks and bolts and bars, Europe is beginning to understand that approximate safety is only to be found in employing plenty of light and a reliable watchman.

It would be hopeless to attempt anything like a description of the merchandise and antiquities here accumulated for sale. Such a catalogue would fill a hundred volumes, in a place where hardly any two objects are alike. What strikes one is the enormous product of Eastern manual labor, its variety and its artistic beauty, and those facts are more familiar in the West than they were twenty years ago, when no

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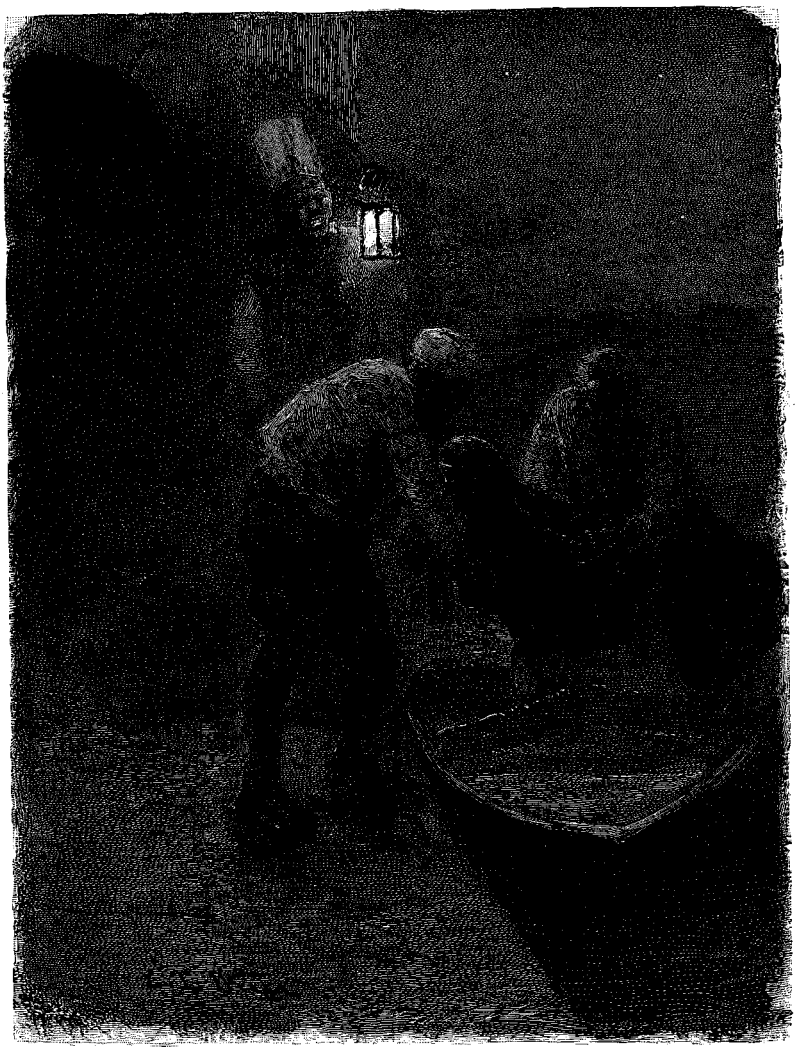

More than one rebellious beauty of the harem was carried out, sewn in a weighted sack.—Page 727.

average cultivated person could tell by inspection whether a carpet were a Giordes or a Smyrna. But one is tempted to ask whether the world would not be richer and far more beautiful if the countless eyes that pore over "miserable books" and the innumerable fingers whose cherished occupation is to look as though they had none, were employed in producing something useful and yet not machine-made.

Constantinople owes much to the matchless beauty of the three waters which run together beneath its walls, and much of their reputation again has become world-wide by the kaik. It is disputed and disputable whether the Turks copied the Venetian gondola or whether the Venetians imitated the Turkish kaik, but the resemblance between them is so strong as to make it certain that they have a common origin. Take from the gondola the "felse," or hood, and the rostrated stem, and the remainder is practically the kaik. It is of all craft of its size the swiftest, the most easy to handle and the most comfortable, and the Turks are gener-

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ally admitted to be the best oarsmen in Europe. Indeed, they have need to be, for both the Bosphorus and the Golden Horn are crowded with craft of every kind, and made dangerous by the swiftest of currents. The distances with the ripples and wake of small light craft, dotted brilliantly with color, the bright red fez, the full and snowy shirt of the kaikja, the rich hues of dark velvets trailing over the stern of a private boat here and there among the rest.

Sweet Waters of Asia.—Bosphorus.

too are very great, and such as no ordinary oarsman would undertake for pleasure or for the sake of exercise. It is no joke to pull fifteen or sixteen miles against a stream which in some places runs four or five knots an hour.

The foreigner avoids the kaik when he is alone, because he cannot bargain, and because the only alternative is the society and unceasing chatter of the tormenting guide. But he loses much. It is well worth while to lie back among the cushions opposite the silent oarsmen with no companion but a cigarette, and to be pulled swiftly up the Golden Horn on a Friday afternoon in summer, choosing the hour so that the sun shall be behind the hill just as the kaik sweeps into the broad lagoon beyond the Arsenal. The river broadens and narrows suddenly again and again, streaked with light and shade, and the reflections of the soft green hills, shot Now, as the water widens, there is room for all and they spread like a fan, hastening to be the first at the narrows beyond; and then you are in the throng again, wondering at the boatmen's matchless skill and sometimes at their marvellous good temper. Then under pretty wooden bridges, between low river banks carpeted with turf. Trees grow in little thickset plantations, and in each tiny grove the coffee-seller has his small furnace of live coals, his water-jar and his array of spotless cups. There, in the deep, cool shade, whole families spend the afternoon at rest, the women and children seated together upon the grass, their ferajehs drawn closely round them and their yashmaks carelessly draped around their faces, while the men are grouped by themselves a little apart. As you near the Imperial villa trees grow more closely together and the people are more numerous; Egyptian fiddlers and

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ENGRAVED BY C. I. BUTLER.

Sweet Waters of Europe.

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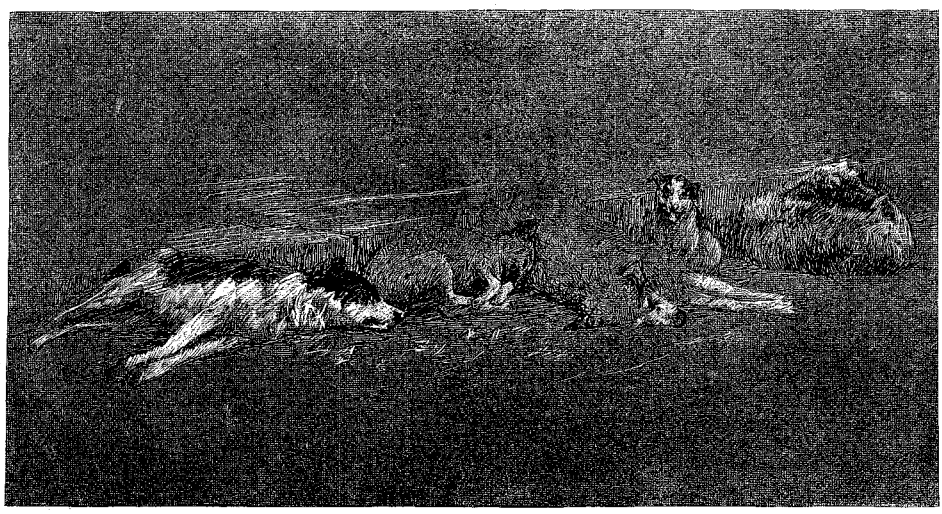
flute-players fill the evening air with strange Arab melodies, often harsh, sometimes tuneful, but always melancholy. The people talk little among themselves, and everywhere the voice of the ice-cream vendor rises loudly above other sounds — dondurma kaimak — frozen cream! A little higher the trees are larger still, the crowd is greater. Carriages of all sorts, from the most brilliant equipage to the humblest country cart, are drawn up in long rows. There are booths and tents—you may eat broiled mutton collops with sour cream, or simple ices, or you may drink sherbet and coffee, and everyone smokes the inevitable, the eternal, the universal cigarette.

And here by the Sweet Waters of Europe, in the pleasant shade and by the cool, flowing water, I will leave you for a space to breathe the gentle Eastern air, to dream out your dream of romance until the shadows deepen to purple, and the silent kaiks drop away down the stream, or if you feel commercially inclined, and have spent your day in the bazaar, to lay deep schemes for the circumvention of Isaac, or Moses, or my dear old friend Marchetto, or of Osman Bey, the honest Turk, in the purchase of the ideal Persian carpet.



Along the Curbstone.

AT A NORTH WINDOW.

By Edith M. Thomas.

One morning only of the gradual year
The sunshine on her window-ledge may fall;
Oh, marvel not her heart is full of fear
Lest clouds that morning keep the sun in thrall!

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AN UNPUBLISHED WORK OF SCOTT.

PRIVATE LETTERS OF KING JAMES'S REIGN.

INTRODUCTION.

By Andrew Lang.

SOME years ago, I chanced to pick up the sixth volume of Lockhart's "Life of Scott," and, opening on page 410, read what seemed to be a letter written in the reign of James I., of England. The style entirely took me in, and it was not till I had turned back for a page or two, that I found the letters were of Sir Walter's own composition. Lockhart says that, in 1821, Scott "amused some leisure hours with writing a series of 'Private Letters,' supposed to have been discovered in the repositories of a noble English family, and giving a picture of manners in town and country in the early part of the reign of James I. These letters were printed as fast as he penned them (this, by the way, is not quite accurate), "in a handsome quarto form, and he furnished the margin with a running commentary of notes, drawn up in the character of a disappointed chaplain, a keen Whig, or rather Radical, overflowing on all occasions with spite against monarchy and aristocracy." When seventy-two pages had been printed, Lockhart, Erskine, and James Ballantyne told Scott that he was throwing away, in those letters, the materials of as good a romance as he had ever penned. Scott listened to this advice, and when riding Sibyl Grey one day, and "patting her neck till she danced under him," told Lockhart that "you were all quite right. If the letters had passed for genuine, they would have found favor only with a few musty antiquaries, and if the joke were detected, there was not story enough to carry it off. I shall burn the sheets, and give you gentle King Jamie and all his tail in the old shape, as soon as I can get Captain Goffe within sight of the gallows."

Captain Goffe is a character in "The Pirate," which was Scott's more serious work in fiction, at the time when he conceived the "Letters," for antiquarian amusement. He was generally occupied on two novels at once, in addition to criticism and history. As a consequence of his promise he began "The Fortunes of Nigel," and in a day or two handed the early chapters to Lockhart, who read them to Terry, the actor, on the pleasant green "haugh" beside the Tweed, at Abbotsford.

By the kindness of Mrs. Maxwell Scott I was permitted, when staying at Chiefswood, Lockhart's cottage, to read the one surviving set of sheets on which the "Private Letters" were printed, with the widest of margins. On the final page I found written, in the well-known and pathetic scrawl of Sir Walter's last days, "Send to Press. March, 1831." He therefore contemplated the publication of the fragment, and in a letter written from the continent in his last journey thither, he reminds Lockhart of the "Private Letters," and of Lady Louisa Stuart's share in their composition.

"Another thing of great interest," Scott writes, "requires to be specially mentioned. You may remember a work in which our dear and accomplished friend, Lady Louisa, condescended to take an oar, and which she has handled most admirably. It is a supposed set of extracts relative to James VI., from a collection in James VI.'s time, the costumes admirably preserved, and like the fashionable wigs, more natural than one's own hair. . . . I wrote one or two fragments in the same style, which I wish should, according to orig-

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inal intention, appear without a name. . . . The fun is that our excellent friend had forgotten the whole affair till I reminded her of her kindness, and was somewhat inclined, like Lady Teazle, to deny the butler and the coach-horses."

Lady Louisa Stuart, a daughter of Lord Bute, was one of Scott's most intimate friends. She could tell him tales of the old Georgian age, of the Duke of Argyle, Jeanie Deans's Duke, who fought at Sheriffmuir, and who was so devoted to a wife no more beautiful or intellectual than Jeanie Deans herself. In "The Heart of Midlothian" Sir Walter introduces a tricky child, daughter of the Duke, who makes fun of Red John of the Battles in a very amusing manner. This child, Lady Mary Campbell, lived to become a grotesque character as Lady Mary Coke. She was in love with the Duke of York (the Hanoverian Duke, not, of course, the Cardinal), and her passion caused much merriment. She left a large mass of memoirs, to which Lady Louisa Stuart wrote a most entertaining and witty preface, full of old court anecdotes and historical reminiscences. The Preface and Memoirs have lately been printed for private circulation: they are the property of the Earl of Home, and are admirably edited by his brother, the Hon. James Home. This witty Lady Louisa was by far the most entertaining of Scott's correspondents, and she is almost the only one of them who writes to him about his novels. It is understood that her correspondence may be given to the world. I was disinclined to believe that Lady Louisa had really contributed to the "Private Letters," and thought that Sir Walter, in his latest year, might have forgotten and confused the circumstances. But it is never safe to decide that his extraordinary memory, however weakened by many shocks of apoplexy, was really clouded. Lady Louisa herself, it seems, had forgotten, at least temporarily, her share in the "Private Letters." But she was mistaken. In examining Sir Walter's correspondence, Mr. David Douglas, editor and publisher of his "Journal," finds a note from Lady Louisa, of 1821, vaguely dated "Wednesday Evening." Therein she says "Sir Thomas's letter" (the last in the collection) "beats all the rest out of the field, and is so super-excellent that they will never do by its side." This certainly sounds like the modesty of a contributor. She goes on, "I believe it was found in a trunk of Mr. Haliburton's great grandmother's great grandfather"—an ancestor of Scott's—"the ancientry is so well kept up, yet the defence so exactly what such people make at all times." Again, in writing to Mr. Morritt, of Rokeby, on June 16, 1821, Scott refers to the "Private Letters," parodying their style. "Pray, my good Lord of Rokeby, be my very gracious good lord, and think of our pirated [private?] Letters. It will be an admirable amusement for you, and I hold you accountable for two or three academical epistles of the period, full of quotations of Greek and Latin, in order to explain what needs no explanation, and fortify sentiments which are indisputable. I pray you to think of this. *I must write to Lady Louisa Stuart for further contributions*, as we are about to go to press in good earnest."

Thus it is certain that Lady Louisa's hand is present in the "Letters," and probable that they were not printed till Sir Thomas's was written; after which Lockhart and Erskine prevailed on Scott to give them up in favor of "Nigel." I am indebted to Mr. Douglas for this confirmation of Scott's own letter to Lockhart, published in his "Journal" (ii., 473). No doubt "Nigel" is better than a wilderness of letters, but a curious reader would have liked both. Even in these fragments one sees traces of novel characters, and of a promising plot. The very editor, the Radical Chaplain, who tries to "blackmail" the noble lord, the son of his old employer, is a new character for Scott. He loved not Radicals, but he made this vindictive and unscrupulous wretch utter censures of old manners and abuses which are correct, though hypocritical. The ancient families which possess stores of unpublished history, know well, by bitter experience, how very untrustworthy Dr. Dryasdust can be. Lady Louisa Stuart gave Scott a curious example of Dr. Dryasdust's

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doings with regard to the Marlborough papers, in a letter of great interest. Other cases readily occur to those who are familiar with muniment rooms, and the attics over stables in which the letters of the sixteenth century sometimes repose unread.

As to the story in the "Private Letters," we see that a noble lord has a half-brother to marry; that he desires for him the hand of a ward of the king; that the half-brother, Sir Thomas, has slighted the lady for "her cousin Bess," "the Lady Elizabeth;" that the Royal ward probably prefers some other wooer; that Sir Thomas is a gallant about town, who dines and brawls at ordinaries, like Dalgarno in "Nigel," and who is in love with a mysterious fair Venetian. Here is a very pretty tangle, and about the fair Venetian we are especially curious. Is she mixed up with the plots of Seminary priests, about which warning is given? is she an agent of the "fowle wizard," who keeps the owl suspected by King James, that eminent demonologist, of occasionally walking on all-fours? Priests in hiding, concealed in those "priests' holes," whence Elizabeth's emissaries starved them out, afterward torturing them to death, are picturesque characters. In Scott's hands they would have fared better than under the "Protestant flail" of Charles Kingsley.

All is obscure; we know not how Sir Thomas emerged from prison, how the Royal ward fared, that persecuted lady; what manner of woman the fair Venetian proved to be, or whether the tale-bearing intriguer ever got the baton. We look for a moment through a window of one of Scott's enchanted palaces: kings take counsel; euphuists scribble; knaves conspire; pretty maidens weep neglected; courtiers whisper of fresh favorites, new stars in the court heaven; darkling Jesuits go about disguised; the companions of Dalgarno ruffle and revel; shields clash; swords shine; and then the curtain falls across the casement, and *nox alta premit*. One is sorry to part with these friends, so swiftly introduced, so strangely embroiled, so full of the magical life with which Scott endowed his least considered creations. But "into the dark go one and all," their deeds unchronicled, even their names as unknown as all of ours will be when a few stormy years have sped, and our memory depends on an unread gravestone or two, or a dusty volume on a dusty stall.

Whether the "Letters" would have deceived antiquarians, the Monkbarnses of to-day may decide. To myself, speaking as a layman, the spelling seems almost too archaic for the age, but Scott knew the age and its manners well, having edited, in 1811, the "Secret History of King James the Sixth." His name does not appear on the title-page of the book, but Lockhart vouches for the fact of his editorship. The fragment needs no longer introduction; it is but a literary curiosity, a waif saved from the wreck of one of Scott's Century of Inventions unfulfilled. But it is a fragment of his prime, not like the novel of "The Siege of Malta," written abroad in 1831–1832, a work of which he cherished high expectations in his indomitable spirit.*

ANDREW LANG.

* Some of the letters have been abridged for the present publication.

PRIVATE LETTERS OF KING JAMES'S REIGN.

By Sir Walter Scott.

ADVERTISEMENT.

THE inclosed Extracts were made, several years since, from an uncommonly extensive collection of family papers, in possession of a Nobleman of high rank. They were always designed for Publication at some future period, and, indeed, are to be considered as a specimen of a much larger work. But, from circumstances sufficiently indicated in the Dedication, the Editor is deprived

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of the opportunity of gratifying the Public with the dates and names of the parties between whom the letters were exchanged. The Editor was informed, by a learned friend, that one or two of the letters had already appeared in print; but in which of the voluminous productions of this nature that refer to the period, the Editor has been unable to discover. Exclusion from the means of revising the copies by actual comparison with the originals, may have also led to minute errors in spelling, as well as other mistakes of the eye and pen. Upon the whole, however, the Reader may be assured that the transcript is as accurate as the Editor's care would make it, at a time of life when his powers were at the best, and were animated with hopes which have since been cruelly blighted; and, under every imperfection which circumstances have occasioned, the Editor trusts his work will be found worthy the attention of all who are desirous of knowing, from the most accurate sources, the manners and habits of their forefathers.

LONDON, 20th March, 1821.

DEDICATION

TO

THE NOBLE LORD

WHO WILL UNDERSTAND IT.

MY LORD,

It is one amongst the glorious privileges of the British Press, that no difference of rank, or assumption of superiority, can enable him who has done wrong, to escape from the complaints of him by whom wrong has been suffered. The closed door, the "word of denial," insolently uttered by the lacquey, cannot, as yet at least, shield the ear of power from the remonstrances of those who have been treated with injustice.

My own case is well known to your Lordship, in all its bearings; and I have stated and re-stated it, with the idle hope that some recollection of past days, some gleam of returning regard, some awakening respect to the promises made to a father now in his grave, might incline y^r Lordship to make good, in a certain degree at least, the natural expectations which these promises excited, and to repair, as far as it can now be repaired, the neglect which has left me to struggle with difficulties in my more advanced age, because I dedicated with unselfish zeal, the best of my youth to your Lordship's service, and to that of y^r late honoured Father. Every effort having been made in vain, I have chosen the present mode of compelling y^r attention to my situation, aware that it will hardly be agreeable to your Lordship that a *Second Edition* of this Dedication should appear, with the name, rank, and titles, of him whom I have now the honour to address.

The principal motive for the present publication arises from that part of my life (I am sorry to say the best years of it) which was not wholly employed or wasted in y^r Lordship's immediate service, during the time of my residence at ——. Your Lordship will please to be informed, in case you should not already know it, that to an excellent library of old authors, y^r ancestors added a curious and extensive collection of manuscript correspondence from the time of Elizabeth, when (despite the fables of flattering genealogists) your Lordship's family first rose into eminence, down to that of George I., when the series was discontinued perhaps from motives of safety; for your Lordship has not the honour (if it is one) to be the first of y^r house, who entertained Tory principles. From this large mass, to which the liberality of the late Lord . . . . permitted me free access, I made liberal and accurate extracts, with a view of one day giving to the Public documents, which, in my opinion, go as far as any which have yet appeared, to enable us to form a real and unbiassed opinion of the manners, habits, and sentiments of English persons of rank, during the seventeenth century. I have reason to think my intention was known to and approved by my late Lord; at least thus far, that when I spoke of the deep interest which was likely to be excited by such a publication, he always expressed himself to the same purpose.

It would therefore be, in any ordinary case, unnecessary to vindicate myself from any charge of breach of trust, or abuse of opportunity, while availing myself of the fruit of many days' labour,

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in a manner which must produce to the Public such a stock of additional and interesting information. Yet, I must say a few words more in my own vindication, since the most innocent opinions, and the most laudable actions of my life, I mean, the ardour of my political sentiments, and the manner in which I have been occasionally obliged to sustain them, have been objected to me as causes for obstructing my progress in society.

I would, therefore, in the first place, point out to your Lordship, that I have selected my specimen of the correspondence of the family of ——, chiefly from the time of James I., although some Letters may have been written during the early part of the reign of his misguided son. At so distant a period, my Lord, I do not apprehend your feelings of family honour can be acutely interested in behalf of your noble ancestry, however you might feel, had I lifted the veil which covers the proceedings in a certain great divorce case, during the reign of Charles II. But, farther, I have carefully omitted in the following publication, every thing in these letters which could point out the names of the persons by whom they were written, so that it will rest with your Lordship's prudence whether these particulars are ever known to the Public. A Sacrifice this was, my Lord, and to me no slight one; since it affected those circumstances which went to prove, in the most satisfactory manner, the authenticity of the records from which I have made the following extracts. The same desire to avoid unnecessary disclosure, prevents my attaching to this Dedication the name of the person who now addresses you— a name, my Lord, which would at least carry with it warrant that he who owns it is incapable of deceit or dishonour, but which must now be concealed, since, to mention it, would be to reveal that of your Lordship.

The absence of these natural warrants for the authenticity of the following Extracts, will, however, prove of the less consequence, as the internal evidence of the correspondence must be of itself perfectly satisfactory to all who have given themselves the trouble to consider the style and manners of the seventeenth century. And to this consideration must be added the probability, that circumstances may happen to induce, or rather to oblige, me to raise the veil which I have for the present dropped over the names and dignities of the correspondents whom the following pages introduce to the reader. In the mean while, I think it necessary to preserve silence on these topics, in order to obviate the blame which might otherwise be imputed to me, however unjustly, as having betrayed the family secrets of the patron (such I believe is the word used on the like occasions) with whom I once dwelt. In truth, if I know an accusation from which my nature recoils more indignantly than another, it is that which might ascribe to me anything approaching to breach of confidence; and rather than be the individual against whom such a charge could be made with justice, I would chuse to be the man who could break asunder and cast from him the bonds of early friendship, or even he who was capable of neglecting the wishes of a deceased father.

I am, my Lord, with such sentiments as must necessarily arise out of the mingled recollection of former days, and of the present,

Your Lordship's most obedient
Humble servant,
J. H.

LETTER I.

TO A NOBLEMAN FROM HIS KINSMAN & AGENT AT COURT.

Good My Lord,

If I fulfill not to the letre everie particular whereof you give direction, thincke not that I seeke to spare myne owne paynes, or be growne a slugge in your service. Rather would I overshoote the marke in what so ever appertayneth to the same, thanne let the shafte drop mid-waie for defaulte of vigorous handlynge of my bowe. Yet, true it is, I have not gone agayne whither you would have me goe, nor am I yet mynded to obeie you therinne. I praie you, unto what ende should it serve? Her teares, lamentes, and entreatyes would be renewed, & soe would my perplexi-

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tie, in coyneinge sorrie excuses; and alle would againe be atte a stande stille. Did I knowe of a suretie that we were the strongeste, this fayre antagoniste might be encowntered in another fashion. A fewe stowte wordes, roundely uttered, might worke more upon her waywardness, than such smooth fauninge as we have perforce employed hithertoe, and with small goode effect. But saie that I arme my tongue with threttes of the Lyone's wrath, and she see not the Lyon looke grimme, nor lashe his tayle, then were we well holpen, and I most like unto a cur, who grinneth to affraye simple shepe, but hath no sharpnesse of toothe to serve his turn for a lustie bite.* I confesse me muche oute of haste respectinge this *negotium*. In especialtie, I mislike greatlie of the laconike answere you have drawne from my anciente Lorde, Reynard the astucious. None so watcheth the bloweinge of the courte windes as he doeth; and, by my faythe, he would have eaten his penne, even unto chokinge therewithall, or ever he had used so peremptorie phrase, unlesse he conceived of some great ones that they were contrarious to your desires. I would you gave me license to beate the bushe with old Wonthrop touchinge those bondes. Should the tide turne crosselye, I knowe but this; that an if youre lordshippe could withdrawe youre owne handes oute of his nette, it were the safest course to castle on the other side of the borde, and leave caringe for the *knyghte*.† Else you riske youre whole game for one piece, and, with your good pardon, one that evermore *moveth askewe*.

Yet, *desperare de republica* is not my wonte. We maie lighte in firme grounde, and on our feete still. But the likelyhode or unlikelyhode of our soe doeinge is not to be knowne quicklie, synce there is such a stirre at present, that the mightier men of the erthe can at no hand be brought to treate of anie private matter, either for friende or foe. A proclamatione is this daie made agaynste Popish recusants, and the counsayle sate long and late yesterdaie; the cause bruited to be advices privilie come from Sir Charles Cornwallis, he who went leiger intoe Spayne. Men saie that he hath discovered a practice of great dangere *to four hundred and twenty-nine*, betweene certaine religioners at Madrid, and some of oure runawayes there refuged, Irish and other suche.‡ It is verie like to be true; for one who hath familiaritie with Mr Secretarie, did entruste me with thus much three months agone, that the Lord Ambassadore wrote of these fugitive traytores, as workinge some subtile mischeefe under grounde. Dothe your Lordshippe aske, what more is saide? As well maie you, how many birdes bete theire winges in the aire. . . . Your Lordshippe's concernes drawe me backe to them. Leaving Sir Thomas to unthredde alone the clew which his wille fullenesse hath wounde for himselfe, were it not good that you should bethincke you of him who is neerer to you than a brother, and albeit a striplinge, yet now of yeeres to be matched, so as it could be ordered with advantage? Mr Richard Broune, an honeste gentleman, and true to you, hath held some distante speeche with me of a Wiltshire knighte, now in London, who hath a faire estate, well timbered, worthe better than £500, of yeerly rente. His yonge daughter it's sole heyre. She shall soone be twelve yeeres olde, and he purposed not to match her till she should enter her fourteenth yeere, but he being dropsical, and lookinge for no longe life, and some having possessed§ him that an Erle, his neighboure (one known

* The Lyon appears to be gentle King Jamie.

† Circumstances afterwards shew this knight to be a brother uterine of the Noble Lord for whom it was the object to obtain a rich match.

‡ "Four Hundred and Twenty-nine" is doubtless King James.

§ Notwithstanding the coarse and careless manner in which these particulars are stated by the unfeeling writer, what an affecting picture do they present to the eye of sensibility. The venerable father attacked by a mortal disease, trembles for the fate of his lovely daughter, as yet only an innocent child. To whose charge shall he commit this treasure? Whom can he depute to shield the tender bud from injury, until, ripened into a beauteous flower, it may be gathered by the hand of virtuous love, and sheltered in the bosom of manly sincerity? Shall he place her under the control of her pious aunt? Shall he intrust the wisest and worthiest of his male relatives with the management of her property? Alas! That posthumous authority which God and nature vested in his hands, tyranny, feudal tyranny, has taken away, his darling child is to be the ward of a callous stranger, called *the King*. The contemptible James, the crafty Salisbury, must become the arbiters of her destiny; and from his bed of sickness he already beholds the rapacious courtier, to whom they have consigned her, hovering like a vulture, in readiness to snatch his prey, as soon as death shall dismiss her sole protecter to the tomb. Thus does arbitrary power, pursuing us even into those domestic recesses which it might be supposed least able to penetrate, canker the root of private, while

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unto you), lyeth in waite for her wardshippe, nay, hath obtained *forty-three's* promise it shall be his; the good sire sweareth he will marry her out of hande, although it were to the hynde that holdeth one of his plows. She hath been bredde by an aunte, a widowe, whom three husbandes have abundantly joyntured. The firste was a rich citizen of Aldgate, from whom she had money and moveables. Broune speaketh of her as somewhat of a puritan and very penurious. He doubteth that she will not unloose her purse-strings while living; but when Atropos shall at once cutte her thredde, and the knotte which fasteneth them, the damsel, like unto Danae, maye receive in her lappe a showre of golde. The father is of anncient blood, else I had closed the colloquie by a brief nay; although you shall scarce finde one amongste youre peeres,* with a son of fourteene, who would stande upon that nicetie, when such a partie did presente itselfe.

I beseech youre Lordshippe, if all this be as Broune recounteth, catch fortune by the forelocke which she proffereth you. It shall be my care to examine into it strictlie; wherefore I trust you will send me your commandes speedilie, and by a speciall messenger. Broune can brynge me to the father at an howre's warninge, for he lyeth not far off. Till I learn youre farther pleasure hereupon, I reste

Your dutiful and most loving kinsman.

LETTER II.

TO A NOBLEMAN FROM A FRIEND, REFUSING TO INTERFERE IN A MATRIMONIAL NEGOTIATION.

My Esteemed Lord & verie goode Friende,

I was verie much honoured by youre letre, of the 18th instannte. My poor servisses, you neede entertayne noe doubte, are at all seasones youres to comannde; but touchinge this present affayre I see notte aughte I canne doe thereinn, my yonge cozenne Moll being no waie at my disposynge. She is the Kingge's warde, and notte mine; what smalle dutie she oweth to me, she maie withholde if she liste; wherefore am I loath to clayme itt, or to assayle her with my perswasionnes. Those of your noble self, as more eloquente thanne anie my scantie witte could frame, soe are they like to be crouned with better successe. Itte maie well have fallen out as you saie, for these yonge silly wenches be moste times fickle, but whomsoever she nowe affecteth or avoideth, thinke you she will poure her love-secrettes intoe the dull eares of soe grey a head as mine? My Lorde, I am a plaine man. Thus it standeth to my simple comprehensioun. If the Kynge's hyghnesse affectionate the cause, and wille that she espouse youre brothere, what neede is there of my intermedelinge? Saving the reverence due (which so homely a phraise maie seem to impugne), his Majestie knoweth howe to butter his bredde without my helpe; he lacketh notte means to effecte his royalle purpose, and that right speedilie, as canne be wished. But an if he will otherwaies, I trow medelinge maie prove a tycklishe game for those who plaie thereatte, and I choose notte to be of theyre companie. I had three monthes strait lodginges in the Towre, in the old Queene's time, for that my father was inwarde with my Lorde of Westmorelande, although, God knows, neither hee nor I partoke of his treasone.† My stomacke serveth me notte to return thyther at threescore and twelve. With hartie praiers for youre Lordshippe's healthe and prosperousnesse,

I remayne.

LETTER III.

FROM A KINSMAN TO A NOBLEMAN ON THE PROSPECT OF WAR.

My verie Good Lord,

My heartie commendatiounes being first premised, I have to informe you,

it subverts the foundations of public, felicity. Yet a poet (but *be it observed a Tory poet*) did not blush to exclaim,

—— "How small of human hearts endure,
That part which laws or kings can cause or cure!!!"

* The assertion (or admission) here made by my Lord's obsequious kinsman, will strike the reader as *naïve*, but was probably founded in strict truth. If the nobility of that age could so easily sacrifice at the shrine of interest their favourite chimera, family pride, what (may we ask) was the fate of good faith, honesty, and honour, still greater chimeras in their estimation, and rarely the favourites of nobility in any age—*unless perhaps the present?*

† "The old Queene" is Elizabeth.

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that of the suite which Suncote pursuethe against your Lordship's interest's, more of zele than discretioun, it is naught; and, with righte handling, will so be founde. Alweyes, it is sertain, there be those who hold him in hande with fair promises, that they wille do this and thate, but what then? Your Lordship is wise, and well knoweth he that goeth to court with his purse in his hand, shall lacke no such fair-weather friendship in words, when, in effect, it shall prove in verie dede moonshine in the water. Mean time, it is a world to see how this bruite of a war hath stirred up the hot bloodes both in court and citie, and how you shall see him ramping as if wer come of new from a foughten felde, and him bridling, as if his fote had stode but now on the necke of his overthrown enemy; whereas the most dangerous adversary of the one, hathe bene the pore meeke citizen, whom he thrusteth to the walle, and the best triumphe of the other hath bene over the woodcocke, which he kervith at his ordinarie. Natheless we are for buffe and bandelier, alle perchance excepting one, who, it may be, had enoughe of such bandying (if Scottis tongs speak truth) before his eyes opened on the daylight.*

And albeit that a sertain person, who wolde, of his goode wille, be thought to do muche, and who, in verie dede, doethe not a little, may something inflame this warlike humour; yet I promise you, he hathe been taken up sharplie with a *Bellum inexpertis dulce*, or such like pithee program, as hath prooved a cooling julap to an over-hotte liver. This for your Lordshippe's owne ear, for it is no part of prudence to spread sich tydings. Another tale there was, but I accompte it less to be rested upon; albeit Harie swears it for a truth; yet Harie's oath lying a-pawn upon such a mater, may not be so redely redeemed as wolde be his newly broidered glove; wel my lord, Harie sayeth, that when yonder stout westerne Knighte cam into the presense, having his broidered buffcote, and his pickavant bootes, with his cokfether in his cap, and al his other choice peces, as befitteth him that wolde be a litel Mars, and specially his sworde and poignado, with his pistolets at his belt; which wer the harder to digest than alle, for burnt children — (your Lordship wotteth well the proverbe), and so swaggerethe he, a pretie pece of armed pageantrie, God wot. Now Harie taketh it on his deth or life, that the best in the presens should have seyed to him roundlie, "Sir, ye be prettely armed and mand; and ye wer as well victuald, ye might holde out agaynst an Almain sege."† For the Northerne flete, be sure they followe him that hathe the lighte in the poope, though with a lower seyle than in Somerset's daies. If the talk be of pece, you shal see them as mim as maydens, shoting of their pellets of Latin againste them wolde breke God's quiet and the Kinges; and if the speche agayne be of war, tush! ech one of them will bring as many men as should wey up the Palatinate, were it sunk in the salte se; it were an esy purchace for a Scotte. Many thinke an your Lordship will keep counseyle, theyre be enow of them here alredy for the gode wille that they bere to us. But I will not say that so thinkethe your Lordship's pore and bounden servaunte, &c.

* The allusion seems to be to the murder of Rizzio, while James was yet unborn.—J. H.

LETTER IV.

FROM A COURTIER TO THE SAME NOBLEMAN.

[This letter is labelled on the back, "Ane pratie allegorie of court mutationes," and does not bear on the story: it is therefore omitted.]

LETTER V.

J. H. (*i.e.* JENKIN HARMAN,)‡ TO LORD ——.

RYGHTE HONOURABLE,

With thankfullnesse I acknowledge your moste wellcome lettere, whyche

† Scott introduces this anecdote in The Fortunes of Nigel.

‡ The same person who writes Letters I. and III., although this and others are in a somewhat larger hand, and subscribed with initials, the two former being unauthenticated by any signature. [This J. H. is not the chaplain editor of the same initials.]

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I gotte yesterdie, bye the handes of Harrie Jeffes, who speaketh cheerilie of youre healthe, as muche amended synce you beganne agayne to use the plesante sporte of haukinge. I would I were a partaker thereinne, for I have by noe meanes forgotten myne olde delighte in fauconrie. Well! I maie live to flie another hauke yette on the browe of Okesmoore, if God soe will, and your Lordshippe withdrawe not youre favoure. I knowe notte well whether to saie here, or place inne a *post scriptum*, that your knave Harye soughte discourse with mee of his owne concernmentes.

Hee conceiteth himselfe to be more fitte for a yeomanne of the butterye thanne a simple lackey, and pledethe his mothere's good service to my yonge Lorde. But I tolde him verie flattlie, that youre heyre's having sucked her mylke, colde avayle him nothinge, seeinge hee was not youre heyre's fosterbrother; wherefore I willed him to mynde his proper busynesse, and leave aspyringe. I used the sharper speeche, because he muttered somewhat of Master Steward bearing him enmities; and surelie for a score of poundes woulde notte I upholde anie manne agaynste M^r^ Davies, thanne whom I opine no graver or faithfuller major-domo ever guided a noblemanne's householde. Never the lesse I make bolde to mentionne Harrie's desire, that youre Lorshippe maie doe your pleasure. In faithe, I beleeve him as well conditioned as moste; and he showed himselfe a talle fellowe in the fray, when the Cornish theeves sette upone youre sumpter-horses, laste Candlemasse was three yeeres. Good Lorde! What a scryblinge is here, and no worde yette to the poynte! I perceive that your honoure is notte greatly moved by the laste tydinges I wrote you; the clew givene to alle thatte sadnesse and straungnesse by the waiting-gentlewoman whom I emploied youre golde angels to converte intoe oure goode angel and trustie spie. You saie you care lytle for the hotte suit makeinge by the younger gallante, or for the leaninge of the ladie's fancy his waie. It is true, *varium et mutabile semper femina*, as syngeth the frende of our schole daies, worthie Vergilius, and as alle shalle have cause to synge or saie, who place dependance onne the unstable faithe of womanne. What then? The landes of her heritage shall continue *semper eadem*, while it plesethe God: the fatte acres of the vale of Eveshame, as your Lordshippe wittilie observethe, they shifte notte nor turne, neither are they prone to choler or shrewishnesse. He wolde be somewhat lesse thanne wise, who loosed his holde on them for a ladye's wepinge, haply without her justly knowinge why; I counsail not soe; if his Majestie stannde firme, she must give waie at lengthe, will she, nill she, and I warrant me she shall doe it gladlie, so but youre brothere plaie notte false to his owne cause. But, my Lorde, what can all the backinge of alle youre frendes upon erthe doe for him, who stirrethe notte a finger to helpe himselfe? Peradventure my wordes maie be thoughte playner thanne becominge; but now thatte I knowe of youre suretyshippe (the whiche I suspected notte heretofore), and howe that Sir Thomas's dettes * maie one daie presse heavilie upon youre honourable selfe, in verie dede itte makethe me madde with him.

He came not once to the courte duringe the holydaies, neither sente he tokenne or new yeere's gyfts to his fayre mistresse. Marry, from his rivalle there came a riche golde chayne, yea and a goodlie ruffe and kerchief for her gentlewomane, which itte coste me sundrie more angels to counterpoyse; else we had spedde alle the worse. His yonge Lordshippe went uppe to the banquet on Twelfth night extraordinarily brave, wearing her coloures. No offence takenne thereatte. One whom it were discreteste to leeve unnamed, comended his apparelle, and sware he was a promisinge youthe. My Lorde, there be

* Here we see unveiled the real source of this noble Lord's fraternal solicitude. His *honourable* self, it seems, might ultimately suffer some inconvenience, if the most infamous abuse of power in the despot, and every nefarious art of intrigue in the courtier, should fail (as it is much to be feared they did not) in forcing their victim, an amiable and interesting young female, to become the unwilling wife of his profligate brother. Such are kings and nobles.—We beg a thousand pardons—such they *were*, before they attained their present height of purity and virtue. Without disputing the perfections *now so visible* in both these illustrious classes, let us, however, entreat the partisans of aristocracy and arbitrary dominion to contemplate the state of society brought before our eyes in this letter. Possibly they will admire it; if so, we have no more to say.—Ed.

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more cattle besyde wymmenne given to change. Meanwhile, menne talke loudlie of the fayre Venetian; those loudeste, assure yourselfe, who are coldeste in their love to you. I harde that att Mr Vice-chamberlain's, a Lorde Spiritualle shoulde saie he liked ille of such a scandalle within his diocese. Whereupon a Lorde Temporalle (you guesse the parties), takinge uppe youre brother's defence, belike in the fashion that holie Job's visitores toke uppe his comforte. "Tush, tush!" quoth he, "calle it notte scandalle, it will prove honestie; the good knyghte meaneth to wedde his Venetian."—"Howe! wedde a Papiste!" quoth againe the Reverende, "Truly thenne I thincke the council should looke to the matter." See you whither this tendeth? *Non obstante*, these be but vayne and malitious bruites: I holde him farre enowe from anie purpose matrimonialle. Howbeit the Segniora hath newe tyres dayly at his coste; and Winthrop the goldsmith told me of his chafferinge for certaine stringes of perle; but the jewelle-merchaunt stood oute for paiement on the naile—the monies were lackinge, which the olde fellowe woulde not lende, and soe there was one follye the lesse. Touchinge olde Winthrop, he doth indede give his daughter Nell to the base sonne of our cozen, Sir Jerome, who is well pleased therewith. Howe he hath pleased or appeased the usurer, he beste knowethe. . . .

Your Lordshippe's moste bounden kinsmanne,
And humble servant til dethe,
J. H.

LETTER VI.

SIR THOMAS ——, TO A LADY.

[This is an example of euphuism in Sir Percy Shafto's vein, and is omitted.]

LETTER VII.

A COURTIER TO THE SAME NOBLEMAN.

[Respects certain Popish seminary priests.]

RIGHTE HONOURABLE AND WORTHIE LORDE,

My dutie humbly remembered, I am commanded of the Lorde Treasurer to imparte unto youre Lordship somewhat wherin you may doe goode service unto the King oure Soverain, and in soe doinge to what is one with his Majestie, the state. But firste, he praieth you, as his lovinge frende, to pardon him in that he is not his owne scribe; he hath beene sore sicke, and still keepeth his chamber, wherefore he must needes emploie another hande; and of that which he soe graceth, I can truely say, if many mighte be founde skillefuller, yet none more faithfulle. I come untoe the matter.—The Kinge's Majestie and his Counsayle have been oft-times advertized by the Lord Ambassador Cornwallis, of divers Romische preestes and Jesuittes lyeinge lurkinge within this realme, some harboured by evilly affected persons adheringe to the same idolatrous creede,—some cunningelie disguised to delude and decoie the poorer sorte; all holdinge constante commerce by letter or message with Walpole, Creswel, and the reste of those vipers refuged in Spayne: the danger of whose practises it were spendinge vayne breath to insiste upon. The Ambassador being thus vigilante, soe have the Lordes here, in especialtie my Lord Treasurer, been nothing slacke in following the scente whereon his advices put them, but pursued it in such sorte as they have tracked the vermine to their earths and cavernes, and obtained full knowledge, both of the men and their several hidinge-places. Three of these pestilente fellowes, Jesuittes professed, abide for the present in your Lordship's countie; two of the three in youre neere neiborhoode, under the roofe of a certayn Popish Lorde, whose name you will incontinentlie hit of; the thirde dwelleth cheeflie in the market-towne of ——, but disgresseth manie times to the villages arounde, being had in much esteeme by that simple folke, as skilled to cure ailmentes of man and beaste. His true name is John Rycote; but he calleth himself Roger Marston. He was borne in Devonshire, of Romishe parentes, was earlie sent to Spayne, and thence to Italie, where he entered into the Jesuittes' College at Rome. His age is upon forty-three, his stature tall, his face well favoured, his demeanour grave and sad. He hath blacke

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eyes, verie piercinge, a swarthie complexion, a beard beginning to grizzle. He is reputed learned beyonde moste, hath the tongues, and doth indeed knowe herbes medicinall, and some secrets of alchemy. The resortt unto him is the greater, for that he hath likewise the name of dealing in arte magicke, and is said to foretell the future. —Whether this be a device (as theie put on alle shapes to worke mischiefe,) or whether Beelzebub do verilie visitte suche his apteste instrumentes, is not for me to pronounce upon. The said John (or Roger) delighteth much in dumbe creatures, tameth birdes, hath ever a smalle dogge at his heeles, and fostereth a strange forayne owle, with huge eyes, of a singular brightenesse, whom he feedeth himselfe, and hath rendered familiar, on whom the silly lowtes gaze verie admiringlie. He is not seene to frequente the Lorde youre neibor his house ; but no question he and his brethren have a good understandinge.

One of these, called Ralph Holroyde, is a Yorkshire man by birthe, some fiftie-eight yeeres olde, of a middle size, thin and spare of body, pale and meger of aspecte, his eyes blue, his nose long, his beard white, his teeth fewe in number. He goeth meanlie clad ; looketh evermore downewardes, bearinge himselfe, verie humblie, and speakinge in a softe lowe voice. You woulde thinke him made little accounte of, as a poore scholar who teacheth the children Latin and to write, for his dailie meate. The domestikes set him at noughte—the Lorde & Ladie scarcelie note that he crepeth up and downe theire house ; yet is this all a coloure ; he ruleth everie one therein, as he were an abbot or a pope, and none of his order busier or more craftie than he. The other goeth by the name of Tim (or Timothee) Barnes, & is of Kent. That fowle traytor Walpole sente him hither two yeeres ago, with especiall commendations, his chosen & picked discipile. Him they cherishe more openlie, entertayneing him for theire foole. His yeeres passe not twenty-five ; he is short, thicke in the shoulders and legges, hath greie eyes (one whereof looketh aslaunt), red eye-browes and bearde, large teeth, which his upper lippe covereth but scantilie, he weareth false haire, of a sandy hue, under his foole's cappe. He goeth freely into the village, makinge mirthe with the clownes, of whom he is well liked ; for he is of a jesteinge spirit by nature, therefore doethe his foolinge wittilie, usinge apishe gestures, utteringe bitinge wordes, and joininge in whatever sporte they moste favour. He carrowzeth likewise with the serving-men, soe as to be not seldom overseene in drincke, or at the leaste soe to appeare. For even *in vino* may not dwell *veritas* with these false knaves. And, maugres these toyes and showes of merriment and foolerie, you shall not find a more shrewd and subtle one in all that preestehoode of Ball, nor one who more copieth his master the Devil in seekinge whose sowle he may devoure.

It hath been much canvassed in the Counsayle what course shall be taken with these men. My Lorde had well nigh resolved upon having them forthwith apprehended, and dealt with by lawe ; in which case the Right Honourable, who harboureth Holroyde and Barnes, *mighte not have escaped a full* taste of the Tower fare, together with such physicke as the Star Chamber mighte afterwardes administer. But there be those at Courte, who, for neerenesse of kin and other respectes, doe incline to him (I hope not to his religion alsoe). In fine, the Kinge's Majestie, who, as he is higheste, so is he wiseste, hath stayed any open proceedinge, and willeth that some noble person, of approved loyaltie and discretion, be secretlie commissioned to watch over these caitiffes, whereby, he thinketh, theire deepeste designes shall be detected, and discoverie made of their consortes at home and abroade. Thereupon, my Lorde Treasurer straightewaynameth youre Lordship (as indeede who shall exceede you either in discretion or loyaltie ?), and his Majestie is no slower in giving way to it, saying, "Troth, man, ye have nicked it—it is he who shall serve oure turne." Touching Rycote, or Marston, his Majestie would have him looked to yet more jealouslie than the reste. Soe godlie a prince is this of ours, as he holdeth un-

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lawful and devilishe artes in greater abhorrence than treasone itselfe, although it endanger his sacred person ; and he seeth much likelyhoode, that one thus forsaken of truth, and solde unto wickednesse, should have betaken him to sorcerie, as the rumoure goeth. His Majestie misliketh greatlie of the owle ; for he saith, that the impes or familiares of these damnable witches, use to take strange shapes of birde or beaste. He chargeth you to have this matter carefully sifted, and prudent men, well travelled in discoverie of witch-crafte, set privilie to marke whether the owle carrie itselfe at alle poyntes like unto an ordinarie owle?—whether it looke kindlie on the dogge, or flie at him fiercelie? —whether, when it spreddeth wide its winges, there appeare blacke spottes hidden beneathe? — whether Marston speake unto it in unknown tongues, as if conjuringe?—whether he signe to it with any rodde or sticke in semblance of a wande?—and, cheefelie, whether it doth ever sodainlie adopte some other forme? For, were his Majestie certified of its having once walked upon fowre legges, this would go neere to remove alle uncertaintie, and he should deem it sin to let the fowle wisarde be a day longer at large, or many daies without reapinge his rewarde at the stake. Yet seeing that evil spirittes do ofteneste appeare as dogges and cattes, he would have good heede taken of the dogge also, and note whether it ever seeme to straye from home, following anciente women of doubtefull reporte, on whom lyeth some suspicion in this kind. He would likewise knowe whether Marston frequent any such, under pretence of visiting them in sickenesse, or other colour which may shadowe their meetinge for devilishe endes? . . .

With my dutie as above-said, and very heartie commendationes from my Lorde, I am youre Lordship's

Poor servante to commande.

LETTER VIII.

J. H. TO THE SAME NOBLEMAN.

[J. H. fails in a delicate mission to the ward sought by Sir Thomas.]

LETTER IX.

THE SAME TO THE SAME.*

My Lord,

Touching this new mishappe of Sir Thomas, whereof youre Lordshippe makes querie of me, I wold hartilie that I could, truth and my bounden dutie alweyes firste satisfied, make suche answer as were fullie pleasaunte to me to write, or unto your Lordshippe to reade. But what remedy? young men will have stirring bloodes ; & the courtier-like gallants of the time will be gamesome & dangerous, as they have bene in dayes past. I thinke your Lordshippe is so wise, as to caste one eye backe to your own more juvenile time, whilest you looke forwarde with the other upon this mischaunce, which, upon my lyfe, will be founde to be no otherwise harmful to Sir Thomas than as it shews him an hastie Hotspur of the day, suddenlie checking at whatsoever may seem to smirche his honour. As I am a trew man, and your Lordship's poore kinsman & bounden servant, I think ther lives not a gentleman more trew to his friends than Sir Thomas ; and although ye be but brothers uterine, yet so dearly doth he holde your favour, that his father, were the gode Knight alyve, should not have more swaye with him than shall your Lordship.—And, also, it is no kindly part to sow discorde betwene brethrene ; for, as the holy Psalmist saythe, "*Ecce quam bonum et quam jucundum habitare fratres in unum.*" And moreover, it nedes not to tell your Lordshippe, that Sir Thomas is suddene in his anger,—and it was but on Wednesday last that he said to me, with moche distemperature,—Master Jenkin, I be tolde that ye meddle and make betwene me and my Lorde my brother ; wherfore, take this for feyre warninge, that when I shall fynde you so dooying, I will incontinent put my dager to the hilte in you :—and this was spoken with all ernestness of visage & actioun, grasping of his poinard's handle, as one who wolde presentlie make his words good. Surely, my Lord, it is not fair carriage towarde youre pore kinsman, if anie out of your house make such re-

* This is the letter printed in Lockhart's Life.

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ports of me, and of that which I have written to you in sympleness of herte, and in obedience to your commandemente, which is my law on this matter. Truely, my Lord, I wolde this was well looked to—otherweys my rewarde for trew service might be to handsell with my herte's blode the steel of a Milan poignado. Natheles, I will procede with my mater, fal back fal edge, trustyng all utterly in the singleness of my integritie, and in your Lordshippe's discretioun. My Lorde, the braule which hath befallen chaunced this waye, and not otherwise. It hap'd, that one Raines, the master of the ordinarie where his honour Sir Thomas eteth well nie dailie (when he is not in attendance at Courte, wherein he is perchance more slack than were wise), shoulde assemble some of the beste who haunte his house, havyng diet ther for money. The purpose, as shewn forthe, was to tast a new piece of choice wyne, and ther Sir Thomas must nedes be, or the purpos holdes not, and the Alicant becometh Bastard.

Wel, my Lorde, dice ther wer and music, lustie helthes and dizzie braines, —some saye fair ladyes also, of which I know nought; save that suche cockatrices hatch wher such cockes of the game do haunt. Alweys ther was revel and wassail enow and to spare. Now it chaunced, that whilst one Dutton, of Graie's Inn, an Essex man, held the dice, Sir Thomas fillethe a fulle carouse to the helth of the fair Ladie Elizabeth. Trulie, my Lorde, I cannot blame his devotioun to so fair a Saint, though I may wish the chapel for his adoration had been better chosen, and the companie more suitable; *sed respice finem.* The pledge being given, and alle men on foote, aye, and some on knee, to drink the same, young Philip Darcy, a near kinsman of my Lorde's, or so callyng himselfe, takes on him to check at the helthe, askyng Sir Thomas if he were willinge to drink the same in a Venetian glasse? the mening of which hard sentence your Lordshippe shal esilie construe. Whereupon Sir Thomas, your Lordshippe's brother, somewhat shrewishlie demanded whether that were his game or his ernest; to which demaunde the uther answers recklessly as he that wolde not be browbeaten, that Sir Thomas might take it for game or ernest as him listed. Whereupon youre Lordshippe's brother, throwing down withal the woodcocke's bill, with which, as the fashioun goes, he was picking his teeth, answerd redily, he cared not that for his game or ernest, for that neither were worth a bean. A small matter this to make such a storie, for presentlie young Darcy up with the wine-pot in which they had assaid the freshe hogshede, and heveth it at Sir Thomas, which vessel missing of the mark it was aym'd at, encountreth the hede of Master Dutton, when the outside of the flaggon did that which peradventure the inside had accomplish'd somewhat later in the evening, and stretcheth him on the flore; and then the crie arose, and you might see twenty swords oute at once, and none rightly knowing wherefor. And the groomes and valets, who waited in the street; and in the kitchen, and who, as seldom failes, had been as besy with the beer as their masters with the wine, presentlie fell at odds, and betoke themselves to their weapones; so ther was bouncing of bucklers, and bandying of blades instede of clattering of quart pottles, and chiming of harpis and fiddles.

At length comes the wache, and, as oft happens in the like affraies, alle men join ageynst them, and they are beten bak: An honest man, David Booth, constable of the night, and a chandler by trade, is sorely hurt. The crie rises of Prentices, prentices, Clubs, clubs; for word went that the Court-gallants and the Graie's-Inn had murther'd a citizen; alle menne take the street, and the whole ward of * is uppe, none well knowing why.

Menewhile our gallants had the lucke and sense to disperse their company, some getting them into the Temple, the gates whereof were presentlie shut to prevent pursuite I warrant, and some taking boat as they might; water thus saving whom wyne hath endaunger'd. The Alderman of the ward, worthy Master Dauvelt, with Master Deputy, & others of repute, bestow'd themselves not a litel to compose the tumult, & so

* The name of the ward illegible in the MS.

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al past over for the evening. My Lord, this is the hole of the mater, so far as my ernest and anxious serch had therein, as well for the sake of my blode-relation to your honourable house, as frome affectioun to my Kinsman Sir Thomas, and especiallie in obedience to your humble and regarded commandes. As for other offence given by Sir Thomas, whereof idle bruites are current, as that he should have call'd Master Darcie a codshead or an woodcocke, I can lerne of no such termes nor anie nere to them, only that when he said he cared not for his game or ernest, he flung down the woodcock's bill, to which it may be there was sticking a part of the head, though my informant saithe otherwise; and he stode so close by Sir Thomas, that he herde the quart-pot whissel as it flew betwixt there two hedes. Of damage done among the better sort, there is not muche; some cuts and thrusts ther wer, that had their sequents in blood and woundes, but none dedlie. Of the rascal sort, one fellowe is kill'd, and sundrie hurt. Hob Hilton, your brother's grome, for life a maymed man, having a slash over the right hande, for faulte of a gauntlet. Mary he has been a brave knave and a sturdie; and, if it pleses youre goode Lordshippe, I fynd he wolde gladlie be prefer'd, when tym is fitting, to the office of bedle. He hath a burlie frame, and scare-babe visage: he shall do wel enoughe in such charge, though lackyng the use of four fingers.*

The hurtyng of the constabel is a worse mater; as also the anger that is between the Courtiers and Graie's-Inn men; so that yf close hede be not given, I doubt me, we shall here of more *Gesta Graiorum*. Thei wil not be persuaded but that the quarrel betwixt Sir Thomas & young Darcie was simulate; and that Master Dutton's hurts wes wilful; whereas, on my lyfe, it wil not be founde so. The counseyl hath taen the matter up, & I here H. M. spoke many things gravely and solidly, & as one who taketh to herte such unhappie chaunces, both against brawling & drinking. Sir Thomas, with others, hath put in pledge to be forthcoming; & so strictly taken up wes the unhappie mater of the Scots Lord, † that if Booth shulde die, which God forefend, there might be a fereful reckoning: For one cityzen sayeth, I trust falslie, he saw Sir Thomas draw back his hand, having in it a drawn sword, just as the constable felle. It seems but too constant, that thei were within but short space of ech other when this unhappie chaunce befel. My Lord, it is not for me to saie what course your Lordshippe should steer in this storm, onlie that the Lord Chansellour's gode worde wil, as resen is, do yeman's service. Schulde it come to fine or imprisonment, as is to be fered, why should not your Lordshippe cast the weyght into the balance for that restraint which goode Sir Thomas must nedes bear himself, rather than for such penalty as must nedes pinche the purses of his frendes. Your Lordshippe always knoweth best; but surely the yonge Knyght hath but litel reson to expect that you shulde further engage yourself in such bondes as might be necessary to bring this fine into the Chequer. Nether have wise men helde it unfit that heated bloode be coold by sequestration for a space from temptation. Ther is dout, moreover, whether he may not hold himself bounden, according to the forme of faith the which such gallants and stirring spirits profess, to have further meeting with Master Philip Darcie, or this same Dutton, or with bothe, on this rare dependance of an woodcocke's hede, and a quart-pot; certeynly, methoughte, the last tym we met, and when he bare himself towards me, as I have premonish'd your Lordshippe, that he was fitter for quiet residence under safe keeping, than for a free walk amongst peceful men. ‡ And thus, my Lord, ye have the whole mater before you; trew ye shall find it—my dutie demands it—unpleasing, I cannot amende it: But I truste neither

* The death of the *rascal* sort is mentioned as he would have commemorated that of a dog; and his readiest plan of providing for a profligate menial, is to place him in superintendence of the unhappy poor, over whom his fierce looks, and rough demeanour, are to supply the means of authority, which his arm can no longer enforce by actual violence! [Chaplain editor.]

† Perhaps the case of Lord Sauquhar. His Lordship had the misfortune to be hanged, for causing a poor fencing master to be assassinated, which seems to be the unhappy matter alluded to. [Chaplain editor.]

‡ It would appear this worshipful kinsman had more respect for his own safety from Sir Thomas's resentment, than he had for the liberty of his fiery cousin. [Chaplain editor.]

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more evil *in esse* nor *in posse*, than I have set forth as above. From one, who is ever your Lordshippe's most bounden to command, etc.

LETTER X.

SIR THOMAS —— TO THE NOBLE LORD, HIS BROTHER UTERINE.

MUCH HONOUR'D MY GODE LORD AND VERIE DEAR BROTHER,

I have received by Jolly the firste tidings I have herd of your Lordship since my mishap; and, as things stand with me, I wolde not unwillinglie have remained yet longer in ignorans of your displesour, rather than have thus had it confirm'd under your owne hande. My Lord, my case is sadde enow; and it needs not that my frendes aid those evil influences which make me at this present to sing Fortune my foe. But I will willinglie hope that it was no part of your Lordshippe's purpose to rub the sore, but rather to launce the wound, lest it breid to an impostume. Wherefore I give heartie thanks for that which I redde with a heavie herte. Touchinge Boodler's note, I dare safelie warraunte your Lordshippe it is not as he saiethe. Godes I had of hym, and sum monies; but, as I am christened gentleman, not above the mountance of cc marks, which he wolde now swell to pounds, besides the usuages which he hathe wrung from me. It is the same with Allsop, Mawly, Lester, & the whole knot of them, who are tugging at my bones as hounds at a drawn fox. They did press me ernestlie to keep their monies for them; and surely it is no feir game thus to press to have them backe agen, because they see me at disadvantage. Surelie there is no feir deling in this; and I think they be in conspiracie together ageynst me, so thick did their writts come after newes of the first arrest. As for the other mater, wherein I am tax'd by your Lordshippe, as if the Privie Counsail lack'd your aide, I will uphold, on the faith of a gentleman, that I am in no fault therein, saving that I would not take with coldness, that which was so hotely thrown forth against mine honour. I think, my Lord, ye wolde not that your Lordshippe's brother schulde endure more shame than befits your mother's son, and as I maie also well saie, the son of your mother's husband, synce I have never herd that our ladye mother diminished her gentrie, or did dishonour to the memorie of your Lordshippe's dead father, or to your living self, when she wedded the gode Knight Sir Gilbert, who begat me. Touching the rumour that I should have called Darsie a codshead, I do say, that out taking your Lordship, he is a codshead, and a cuckold to boot, that will say so much. For the fellow that hath got such hurt, fear ye not, my Lord, but he shalle do well enoughe. In feyth, my Lord, the cuckoldie constable hath but his desertes, for he laid at me with his brown bill as if he hadde bene threshing whete; and when I could have passed my weapon clene through hym, I chaunged my ward, and gave him a bloodie coxcombe. And for that his wyfe hodethe me so harde in hand, and sayeth so and so in peticions and utherweys, never believe me, my Lord, but that I think she is angered that I hit him not the surer way, & made her quit on him. Tush! he shall do wel enoughe, if cowardice kil him not; and an he will die of a feynt hart, I hope I shall not be call'd to answer that which I could not amende. Yet, what vexeth me worst of alle, is the maiming of my poore knave, for his service in my behalf. My Lord, let me pray yow, as ever ye would have love and dutie of me, to be my good Lord in this mater, I trow ye have a more goodlie nature, albeit you now carrie a harsh countenance toward me, than to see a poor knave starve because he stode by the son of your mother, and fledde not from his master's side. Ye have means enoughe, and litel will serve. There be the Ings of whiche I was to have share, —give him what will kepe him there by his hands labour, and reckon it to me as ye liste. My Lord, your being good to me in this mater, shall more amende what you think amiss in me than twentie homilies; and for the affair ye wot of, it shall be fine drawn, so soon as my feet are clear. Fear not that this clash of wordes wil make the fair bird fly. I do know that kind of fowle, under favour,

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better than youre Lordshippe; and I uphold she shall take that which has chaunced for good service in her servant. Let me alone to amend alle. But, my Lord, that this may be, I must be freed from my present condition; and, I am evel advised, ye may drive my mater to an esy fine, an ye go the right way to work. As to your kinsman, Jenkin Hargrave, by whose counsell you set so much stirr, it is not worth a bean-straw in the caice. And when he says I menassed him with my dagger he doth himself more grace than I ever purposed; for I thought but of battoning him like a dog, to beat the tale-bearing spirit out of him. But as he longeth to your Lordshippe, let him ete his brede in safetie; he shall not, without new motive, be questioned of or troubled by me. So I trust your Lordshippe will remember old friendship rather than new mislikings, which in my feyth ye have entertained upon scant cause, and so stand my friende in this mater, that I schal ever have reason to accompt you my loving brother and exceeding good Lord. In which hope I subscryve myself, &c.*

* However little we regard this specimen of aristocratic and fashionable profligacy, we cannot help esteeming the writer of the above letter far more than we do the cold-hearted scheming Peer, and his rascally cousin and agent, Jenkin Hargrave, who appears to have been the writer of several previous letters in this Collection. [Chaplain editor.]

WINTER SONG.

By Duncan Campbell Scott.

Sing me a song of the dead world,
  Of the great frost deep and still,
Of the sword of fire the wind hurled
  On the iron hill.

Sing me a song of the driving snow,
  Of the reeling cloud and the smoky drift,
Where the sheeted wraiths like ghosts go
  Through the gloomy rift.

Sing me a song of the ringing blade,
  Of the snarl and shatter the light ice makes,
Of the whoop and the swing of the snow-shoe raid
  Through the cedar brakes.

Sing me a song of the apple-loft,
  Of the corn and the nuts and the mounds of meal,
Of the sweeping whir of the spindle soft,
  And the spinning-wheel.

Sing me a song of the open page,
  Where the ruddy gleams of the firelight dance,
Where bends my love Armitage,
  Reading an old romance.

Sing me a song of the still nights,
  Of the large stars steady and high,
The aurora darting its phosphor lights
  In the purple sky.

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AN ARTIST AMONG ANIMALS.

By F. S. Church.

ILLUSTRATIONS BY THE AUTHOR.

"DON'T you think that an authority on natural history would have cause for serious objection in your peculiar disposal of the animals and birds depicted by you?"

"Well, yes, I suppose he would, but I am not posing as an animal painter, you see. It might surprise you to know what facts I could place before you for authority for what I do. See here!"

The artist was working on the painting of "Una and the Lion," which is reproduced in this article on page 753, and indicated a portfolio before him with hundreds of studies of the lion.

"I go to some pains to know something of what I am doing. Where I make most of my studies, at Central Park Zoo and Barnum & Bailey's, the conditions are all so false that the nature of the beast is changed considerably; but what they do under these circumstances is very suggestive, and these suggestions are readily made into apparent facts."

Perhaps it would make no difference though whether I had this authority or not. I was wondering the other day when I saw an old dog nursing, in addition to her litter of three puppies, a young lion cub, just what would become of that young lion cub in case he was left entirely to the care of that dog, and associated with the young puppies.

Probably it would make a great difference in his after-life, and afford plenty of material for an author or an artist that might seem like a fairy tale. I know I changed the character of a brood of young ducks which came under my care, and in this way. They were deserted in a furious rain-storm by a hen mother. I found them behind some boards, where a faint "peep" attracted my attention. They were dead, apparently, all but one, and he was about gone. I put them in my hat, and took them to the kitchen of the farm-house where I was staying. They were then transferred to a big tin pie-dish, and put into the oven. The servant-girl and myself rubbed and stirred them up, and in a few minutes they were all right, and no worse for their drenching. You know it won't do to let a young duck get too wet—it is death to them. I shall never forget that laughing servant-girl, with her pie-dish full of these grotesque little creatures. I adopted those ducks just to humiliate that old hen, and teach her how to bring up a family in the proper way, and assumed that summer to look out for all their creature comforts. They followed me around like a lot of

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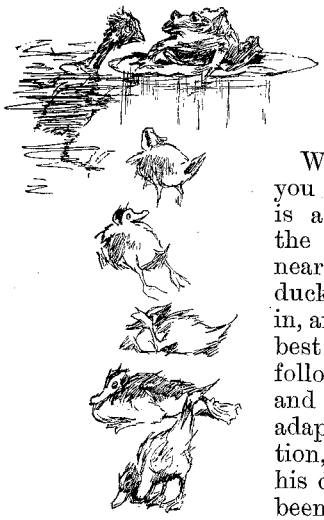
puppies, calling and coming to me when in trouble (you know there is always a lame duck to look after); and they always showed great indignation when not allowed to go with me into the farm-house. I filled a sketch-book with their little lives and the queer incidents brought about by our intimate relationship.

I have a photograph a friend lent me, of a Boston lady with a couple of young lions seated by her side. Her husband, a sea-captain, brought them home to her from one of his voyages. They were very young at that time, but grew up rapidly. As seen in the photograph they are rather dangerous looking. They followed the lady around the house like dogs, and the only time they showed anything like their natural disposition was when a Chinese laundry-man, on the opposite side of the street, made faces at them as they looked out of the window. This would work them up into such a state of ferocity, that they would become almost unmanageable.

That laughing servant-girl, with her pie-dish full of these grotesque little creatures.—Page 749.



Now that old hen who had deserted her ducks, next time she "set," came out one day with a brood of three young ducks and one chicken. What I am going to tell you sounds "fishy," but it is a fact. Do you know the first time they went near the water, the young ducks, of course, went right in, and that old hen did her best to force the chicken to follow them. He waded in and was doing his best to adapt himself to the situation, when he got beyond his depth, and would have been drowned if it had not been for the assistance of the farmer's wife. That old hen had peculiar notions as to how to bring up a family, and was doing her best to carry them out. I never could make up my mind what effect my lesson of humiliation had on her.

What brought me up to the farm was this: I was engaged by a gentleman to give his daughters—two very charming young girls—drawing lessons. They were staying there for the summer. I had started out to be a comic draughtsman, something in the John Leech order, but I met with no encouragement from the publishers, and the father of the young ladies, knowing my desperate circumstances, made me this offer. It was a turning-point, and had much to do with the line of work I have chosen. The family were all great lovers of nature; the gentleman himself had that peculiar influence over animals which we sometimes see, and his daughters, particularly the eldest one, had the same power. I know of a Lady Superior in a Catholic college in the country, who, whenever she started out to walk on the grounds of the institution, which were very large and something like a small farm, would be followed by all the animals and fowls loose on the place. She would start from the house with the cats and dogs, then the fowls, horses, cattle, etc., would follow, till she resembled the leader

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With a most wicked glare in her eye.—Page 752.

of a caravan. There was only a step from the Mother Superior to the beautiful story of St. Francis preaching the sermon to the birds.

The two girls I have mentioned were great observers and collectors of natural objects, and introduced me to everything in the neighborhood in that line. Butterflies, beetles, turtles, squirrels, chipmunks, flowers, and mosses, gave me my first insight to all the attractions of nature. Almost the first day I was there, the younger one took me down to the spring-house, where the milk was kept, to see the tame frogs. The frogs were encouraged by the farmers, as it was said that they helped keep the water pure. Two bull-frogs were having a "set to" when we arrived, and it would have made John L. Sullivan and Mike Donovan jealous to see the "style and game" of these two creatures as they sat up in the water and slapped each other's faces. The ducks had followed me down, and showed some interest in the combat. I often sketched there afterward, handling them for the purpose of more minute study, and they didn't seem to mind it. Through the ducks I was introduced to the rest of the poultry-yard, and we soon were on the best of terms. I ran down the yard one day with the old rooster, to help him fight a hawk that had attacked a wandering hen and her brood of chickens. We "licked," and the hawk took flight, and as we trotted back to the remainder of his family, I felt quite certain that a rooster has a language of his own, and that he was doing his best to express his congratulations. Our friendship from that time was of the most intimate character.

I wanted one day to make a sketch of some dead poultry to introduce in a Thanksgiving idea I was about to submit to one of our publishing houses, and just to see how much confidence they had in me, I took a young hen, tied her up by the legs, hung her, head down, on a nail in the wall, and made a sketch of her in that position without a movement or sound of remonstrance on her part. The orchard was a favorite place for work. If I brought up a turtle from the pond, or borrowed a frog from the spring-house to make a study of, I always had a most interesting audience from the poultry-yard gathered around me, lighting on my shoulders, and with outstretched necks examining with great curiosity my unusual model. A frog, if you know him well, or he knows you well, will often keep very still for a few minutes; then he jumps in the direction he is pointed regardless of consequences.

Young Sand-pipers.

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When he jumped my audience would disappear around the corner of the barn in a great state of disorder, only to return again to satisfy their curiosity. In New York I used to go up to a Fourth Avenue saloon to study a bull-frog they had there. His home, during the day, was in the tank in which glasses were washed, and at night he would come up and sit on the edge of it. He was fed but once during two years, and he was supposed to live on what came from the glasses. One night two gold fishes were put in the tank. The next morning they were gone; and as the frog looked a little stouter than usual, it was evident where they had gone. I have noticed one thing: you never can tell where frogs are looking; and they'll jump off a twenty-story building if you give them the opportunity.

I saw a young girl in the lion-house at the Central Park Zoo modelling a tiger. One morning I watched her for some time, and after she got through her work and was about to go, she took a rose from her dress and threw it into the animal. You know some of the cat family are very susceptible to the different odors, and the action of that tiger must have astonished the young girl. There was every expression of animal gladness in the way that he fondled and caressed the flower. I suggested to the young lady that it might be perfectly safe for her to go in the cage, the tiger seemed in such an amiable mood. She seemed half inclined to act on my suggestion and go in, but perhaps it was just as well she didn't. You can never trust them.

Once at Barnum & Bailey's headquarters, I played a game of pitch the ball with an elephant. I had heard of this particular animal's fondness for throwing things, so I thought I would experiment with him. I made a small ball of hay, tying it up with a string, and tossed it over to him; he had just finished his meal and was in a good condition for the game. He threw it back, and we kept it up for some time, but all of a sudden, for some unexplained reason, he became greatly enraged and began to tear up some boarding near him and hurl it at me, and I had a narrow escape from being brained. Arstingstall, one of Barnum's favorite elephant keepers, was thrown thirty feet one day by an elephant (a very good-natured animal he was too) to whom he was trying to administer a quinine pill.

I have a sketch on my wall—a rough cartoon of a tigress creeping up through the jungle with a most wicked glare in her eye, as if about to spring on a very pretty young woman in diaphanous drapery, who is seated on a bank with her feet in the water, apparently dreaming over a lapful of lotus flowers. That picture was suggested, and an order given to paint it, by a young New England girl, who is, or thought she was, a "reincarnationist." She was one of the finest specimens of New England beauties I have ever seen, from the best old Puritan and Huguenot stock, her father, a magnificent specimen of manhood, following in the faith of his fathers; but she, in a future state, expected or hoped to take the form of a tigress, and go around eating up good-looking young girls. Queer idea, wasn't it, and she had such a sweet and sympathetic disposition? I took the order, but do you know I was never able to make that animal take the fatal leap. With a great deal of persuasion I induced Mr. Conklin, the former careful and thoroughly experienced superintendent at the Central Park Zoo, to allow a tiger to be enraged up to a most desperate point, by having a young bear cub placed dangerously near his cage, and I made lots of studies in movement and expression of that animal's most ferocious efforts to get at the cub, but it was of no use. I then changed the whole idea, and made a recumbent tigress looking up with a most placid expression into the face of the young woman, who still continued to dream over the lilies. The "reincarnationist" was disgusted, and I sold my "idyl" at a quarter of the price to "another fellow." That change of expression cost me $750, and should have taught me a lesson, which some of my realistic friends would say served me right.

One of my female critics, who is not in sympathy with my work, was looking the other day at a picture of mine

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DRAWN BY F. S. CHURCH.

Una and the Lion.

(Original sketch of the painting in the collection of Mr. W. T. Evans.)

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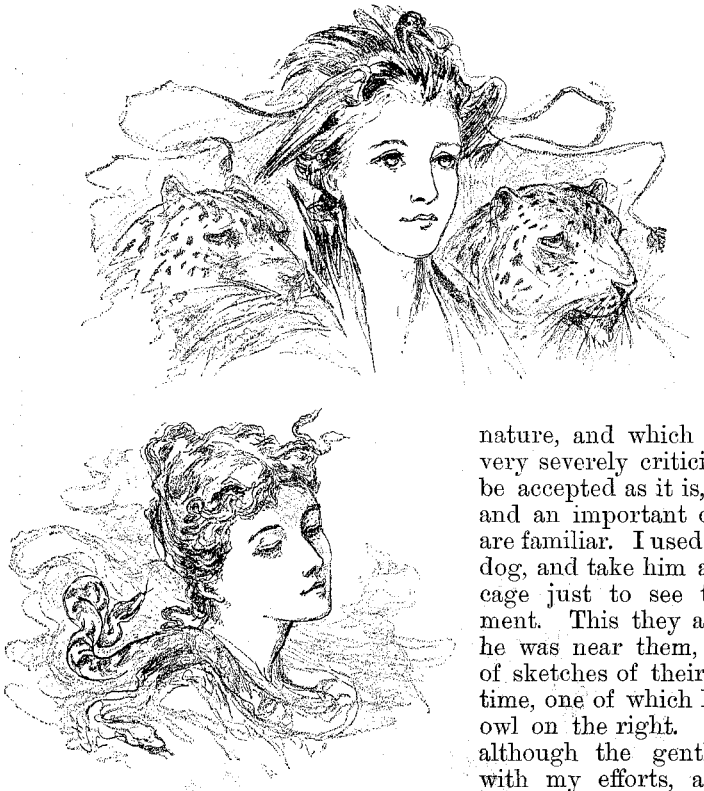

Two Reincarnationists.

which I call "Knowledge is Power." It represents a young girl in college gown reading to a lot of tigers. The lady said: "If anyone needs knowledge that girl does, or she wouldn't be such a stupid fool as to sit among a lot of tigers." An excellent criticism from her stand-point, but perhaps it is not what I am getting at.

There was another case where I came to grief by being too realistic—the case of a decorative panel.

I painted that to go in the guest's sleeping-room in one of the most beautiful homes in the West. The gentleman is a man of the most refined tastes, a connoisseur in pictures and prints, and has a charming collection comprising Whistlers, Chases, Dewings, Thayers, Homers, Murphys, Innesses and others of the same sort. My panel represents a young woman on a poppy vine, lighting with a lamp lanterns which are held in the beaks of a lot of owls. Now you see that owl on the right of the girl? It is in rather an unusual attitude to those who only see the owl as depicted in books or as a stuffed bird. The owl under excitement is another thing, and you would at first sight hardly recognize the bird. I feel certain I could paint an owl picture which would be true to nature, and which would probably be very severely criticised. It would not be accepted as it is, a phase of owl life and an important one, with which few are familiar. I used to borrow Conklin's dog, and take him around to the owl's cage just to see them under excitement. This they always showed when he was near them, and I made heaps of sketches of their movements at that time, one of which I introduced in that owl on the right. The result was that although the gentleman was pleased with my efforts, and the panel was placed on the wall, and delighted his friends, so he said, he himself did not like that owl on the right. He said the owl looked as though he "had a pair of pants on." I got the gentleman to go to the park with me, borrowed the dog, and took him around to the cage. The owls were immediately excited, and I showed him the owl with the "pants on." He came away with me satisfied and happy, and I had my first dinner at Delmonico's, where he introduced me to another condition of things I was in utter ignorance of. Did you ever see Albert Dürer's copper-plate of a rhinoceros? Well, look at it. Talk about "fairy telling" with animals! I'm not "in it."

I spent three weeks once sketching a lot of ostriches in Central Park. They belonged to a young Englishman, who was going to take them out to California to start an ostrich farm. It seems to be characteristic of long-legged birds to indulge at times in a sort of a dance. I first noticed it when I was an express messenger on a railroad

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DRAWN BY F. S. CHURCH.

Twilight.

(A decorative panel in the collection of Mr. C. L. Freer.)

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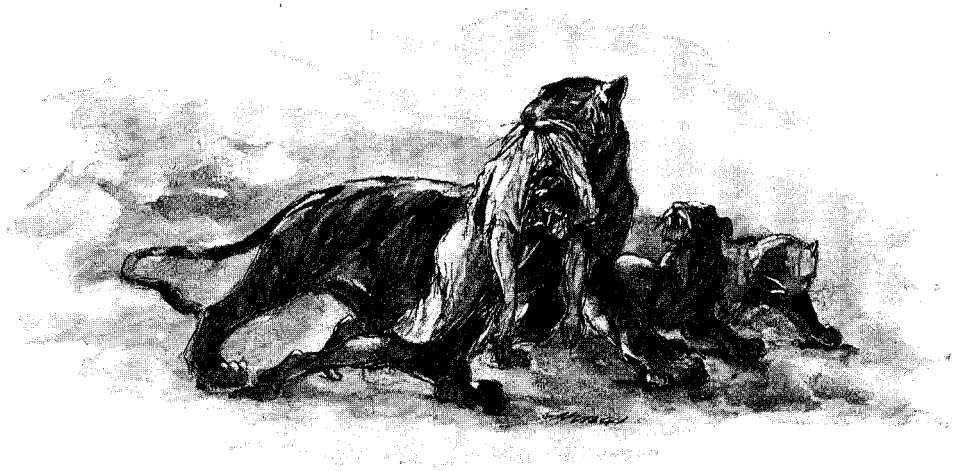

She grabbed one of the sleeping men, and made off with him.—Page 759.

which ran over the Illinois prairies. The sand-hill cranes would congregate at certain seasons and indulge in a real break-down, double-shuffle, pigeon-wing sort of an affair, which formed afterward a subject for an early illustration. I saw the ostriches do something of the same thing, so I chose it for a subject, and worked hard to make it a success, making all the movements to the best of my ability from the live birds on the spot, and sent it to the Academy where it was fairly placed. A well-known art critic thought it of enough value to "sit on" it awfully. He said it was a shame to caricature birds doing something so foreign to their native habits.

It was funny to see those ostriches when they were shipped. That young Englishman walked into the enclosure where they were and put on the head of each a lady's stocking, pulling it well down on the neck, and they were led out like a lot of lambs. They are very stupid, you know, and sometimes very unruly. The kick of an ostrich is worse than one of Mike Donovan's blows. I watched a couple confined in a barn not long since; they would spend hours trying to get out through a two-inch crack in a board. They could see out, and that was enough; they must get out. It was very laughable to see them lift up their immense feet and squeeze their big bodies in their frantic endeavors, only stopping when they were exhausted.

I saw as a boy once a fight between a sand-hill crane and an old gander. It was near my home in northern Michigan, and at that time the cranes were quite common. The fight was a most unexpected combination, but a very interesting one, as I watched it with the rest of the geese. The old gander came out ahead, and the crane picked up his long legs and flew off through the air looking for all the world as I heard a Long Island farmer say when we were watching the flight of one, "like a set of old harness."

Two other "reincarnationists:" one expects to be a bird of Paradise, and travel around with jaguars, taking a day off occasionally, lolling in a lotus flower; while the other, a beautiful girl attacked with the same affliction, hopes to be a Python [see page 754]. Think of it! I never was particularly interested in "nature's master-piece" in the reptile line, till I met her. She had a passion for visiting any place where she could see live snakes—principally dime museums and the side-shows, which were old camping grounds for me, where I had made many additions to my sketch-book. I acted as her "chaperon," and bribed the keepers to stir up the rattlesnakes, feed pigeons to the big boas—anything, so that she could see the whole of sn life. I gave her a rattlesnake be pair of slippers made from a Python's skin, and I started out with the idea of designing a pin made of gems repre-

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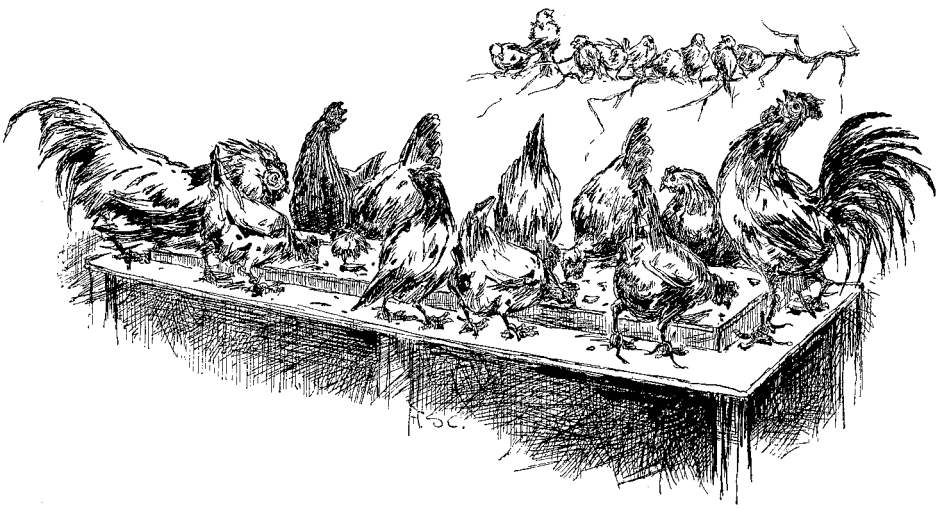
senting a snake—but all of a sudden she lost her interest, and started off on another fad. I suppose she had been reading Elsie Venner and Madame Blavatsky, but I was delighted with the opportunity of helping her, and she gave me sittings for a head which my friends said was a success, "a sort of Medusa in repose."

I never had any pets as a boy, except a few chickens, which I was very fond of. I remember once a neighbor sent over and wanted to buy one of me to make a broth for a sick lady. I didn't stop to say whether I would sell him one or not, but started on a run for the chickens, drove them all into the coop, went in with them myself, and we lay in a state of siege till I thought all danger was over. I remember confiding to them (I was about ten) the situation, with assurance that if the enemy came, it would be over my dead body. I would have as soon consented to have my mother made into broth as one of my chickens. There was a boy who lived next door who had about the same number of chickens, and he was as fond of them as myself. I know we conspired once to give them a Thanksgiving dinner. We made a sort of a long table, such as you see on picnic grounds, boring plenty of holes in the seats. Thanksgiving morning we captured all the chickens, both sets were very tame, and collected during the day part of the food we were to give them. At the regular dinner (our two families dined together that day) we put surreptitiously in our pockets as much of the dainties as we could, and hurried off soon after to the chickens. They were brought out, each boy's chickens tied by their feet to the seats, the two old roosters at either end, and the dainties put before them. There was a great deal of excitement and some remonstrance, but they were hungry, and soon disposed of the dinner. I imagine the two roosters had the least appetite, as they seemed anxious to get at each other. It was a sight!

The reason I am sometimes questioned regarding pets, is because visitors notice a very small bird flying around the room, each time coming a little nearer, and sometimes flying across their faces.

"Don't you call that a pet?" is asked me.

"Oh, no, that's Oliver! He plays too important a part here to be called a pet. He is the assistant housekeeper, and we arrange a good part of our movements to suit his convenience. Objecting to things is his specialty. He begins in the morning to scold Helen, my janitress, and keeps it up all day long. You see he wants you to leave the room."



That Thanksgiving Dinner.

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"I throw this rag doll at him."

The little bird had lit on the table the visitor's hand was resting on, and was scolding away at a great rate. An endeavor was made to pet him, when away he flew up into the big skylight.

"Do you know the only way I can get him down? He likes to perch up there all night, but it is too cold. I throw this rag doll at him," suiting the action to the word.

The doll was very large, the skylight unusually high, and the bird very tiny. Evidently he was in great fear of the doll whose swinging arms and legs flying through the air are very grotesque. The bird came down and spent the rest of his time scolding.

A stuffed gull that hangs in my studio (and by the way, a stuffed bird or animal is no earthly use to me in my work) was given to me the other day by Mr. Conklin, and it has a history—rather a sad one. That gull and her mate, who is now in Central Park, were confined in a circular inclosure there, which was generally used for aquatic birds and animals. It is about thirty feet in diameter, in the centre of which is a large tank of water for the use of the various occupants. At the time of my story several sea-lions, some pelicans, a sand-hill crane, and the two gulls composed the family. In this incongruous surrounding the gulls mated and started to build a nest, picking up what sticks and stones they could find, and for some strange reason building it alongside the tank. It was nearly washed away several times by the splashing of the sea-lions in the water, but they kept on and got something like a nest, and the female laid two eggs. There she sat for days in the hot sun, the male bird by her side fighting and protesting against all intrusion, and half covered with water from the commotion of the sea-lions, who I hope were unconscious of what they were doing. At last two little gulls were hatched out only to be eaten up the first night by some rats. The female died shortly afterward, but whether from a broken heart or not I do not know.

The boss of that inclosure was the sand-hill crane; he was the oldest bird in the Park, and thought he owned the earth. He drove everything, particularly the sea-lions, and it was a comical sight to see him chase them around and around that inclosure when they were out of the tank. They were very awkward in their movements when out of the water. Shortly after the gull episode a box arrived from California with a sea-lion in it, and when they came to take her out of the box a young baby sea-lion was unexpectedly found alongside the mother, not over a day or so old, born on the passage. They were put in the inclosure with the others, and the crane attempted his usual tactics, but the mother sea-lion turned around and bit his head off—"the poor crane didn't know, you know."

The mother sea-lion died a few days after her arrival, and the great question was what was to be done with the baby. Mr. Conklin decided, after several efforts to entice the little fellow to take food of its own free will, that the only thing to do was to force food down its little throat, and it was a sight to see five big men try to make him eat. Two at his tail, one at each side-flipper, and the other putting the food into its mouth; but it wouldn't work, and the baby died.

I often study birds, particularly gulls and herons, by going to their haunts, making myself look as much as possible like some inanimate thing, and then

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waiting patiently till they come around. I get by this means a peep into their real life. I spent a forenoon once with a mother sand-piper and her young one. A furious rain-storm came up suddenly; I was walking along the bay at Staten Island, and I sought cover behind a little projecting bank. I got myself in as small a space as possible, and discovered near me the birds, who in the noise and rain of the storm didn't seem to be aware of my presence. The young bird was quite wet, and presented a very comical appearance. When it cleared off the mother and her young one went all through the performance of drying and arranging their feathers right at my feet, and when I made myself known, the mother bird gave the alarm, flying a short distance to attract my attention, and the little fellow ran off, I following him. When he saw I was getting dangerously near he lay down, and tried to make himself look as much like a stick or stone as possible. After watching him a few minutes I knelt down and touched him with my finger; he got up, ran up my arm and began to pick at a button-hole bouquet I had in my coat. The mother bird flying around in great distress. I gave him a short lecture, and left him to the care of his parent.

One little animal (I suppose it is a fish) figures a good deal in my work—the sea-horse. Dried specimens give you a poor idea of the things alive. I went into ecstasies over them; the first I saw at our old aquarium, where they could be seen and watched to great advantage. They move their little tails like an elephant's trunk, and their inquiring little eyes, each moving independently of the other, suggest that they know an awful lot about the mystery of the sea. They have formed a basis on which I have constructed several marine animals suitable for a mermaid and sea-nymphs to ride and play with.

I paint the lioness much more than I do the lion. Probably few notice the difference, but I use the tigress in all my pictures in preference to the male. There is something in the female of the cat species, particularly, that appeals to me much more than the male. She has certain lines, movements, alertness and quickness of perception, with a sort of you-had-better-look-out expression, which I don't see in the male. I often think of that tigress I read of in a report of the London Zoo, who, accompanied by her two cubs, stealthily approached in the middle of the night a small temporary board shanty, where some native East Indian railroad workmen were sleeping. Leaving her cubs at the door, she stole in, grabbed one of the sleeping men, and made off with him before the horrified occupants could realize the situation. Just think of the peculiar intelligence shown not only in her successful raid, but in her instructions to her cubs, whom she made wait outside for her while she did her terrible work!

They move their little tails like an elephant's trunk.

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THE SEMAPHORE.

By Herbert D. Ward.

SUMACH JUNCTION was the outpost of a huge city system. The proud suburbs halted just a mile away, nor could they be persuaded to advance nearer to the broad, malarious meadow, to the acres of sandhills that bounded it, and to the sluggish river, that, like the Concord, was too lazy to grind the corn that grew upon its banks.

Sumach Junction was only fourteen miles from the city. The "limited" snorted the distance in twenty minutes. Yet it was a desolate place, shunned by all but railroad men and travellers who were unfortunate enough to have to change cars for South Sumach. The Junction, or rather the town, was made up of only a few dreary, wooden houses, and these straggled up track No. 2 or down track No. 1 until they were lost under the sandhills or around the sullen bend of the river. In the heat of the summer and in the radiance of the autumn Sumach Junction was noteworthy and oriental in its blaze of purple foliage and scarlet fruit. Stern New England nature, repenting of its niggardly coloring, gave us one genus in a glorious order of tropical trees; and our Junction, as its name implies, made the most of her generosity. Some æsthetes might have deprecated the vivid contrast of orange and yellow and crimson with the dingy green of the wooden station-house and with the faded brown of the signal-tower and the gray of the overtopping sand-banks; but the station-master, who was a station-mistress, with a passion for geraniums and roses, and for making her barren world beautiful, had no such thought, and she propagated the sumachs from cuttings until there was not a square inch of earth under her control but was brilliant with these passionate shrubs.

But winter, the eternal symbol of jealousy, revenged itself of this fertile beauty with harsh chuckles, and the station-mistress cried every fall as the sumachs withered away, leaving the Junction in a state of ugliness and barrenness that seemed to every one else in natural conformity to the surroundings and appropriate to the New England climate. Then, when the trees were stripped, and the dried clusters of berries swayed piteously to the gale, the two-storied, square signal-tower commanded the attention that perhaps it deserved, and the one-storied station-house under its lee protested with a few potted geraniums in the window against an unkempt appearance as well as against a secondary position.

For the signal-tower, rectangular, with rows of windows on all sides, stood at the intersection of many branches. At this point the trunk line resolved itself from four tracks into two; and here the gravel track, which looked as if it had been laid by a palsied contractor, left the main line and respectability behind and hobbled out of sight behind the signal-station with an intoxicated air. Beneath the tower, to the right, a double-tracked branch tapped a fertile country beyond the sandhills. And beneath the signal-tower, to the left, a single-tracked branch, only a mile long, brought South Sumach, one of those tiresome towns that manufacture on a water-power, in touch with the middle-man. This petty branch (as if the case had been with petty people), made more trouble than all the rest of the lines put together. The signal-men found this out. So Sumach Junction had its place in the world, and perhaps it was a more important one than that of many a complacent and opulent suburb. The heart of this little community did not centre, as a thoughtless person might suppose, in the church, or the commandery, or the grocery-store, or the school, but in the signal-tower. It was the pulse of the section. It was the life-blood of thousands of unconcerned travellers

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whose lives and happiness depended on the intelligent vigilance of three men. These three took turns up there in the tower, locking and unlocking switches and signals, until one might expect them to faint for dizziness and confusion.

It was the winter of the grippe, and Matt Nolan was taken down as if he had been struck by an engine. The grippe has a waltz movement, and, like Strauss, a genius for variations on one theme. We need not pad the subject when we say that Matt had that form of this malady which is popularly known as the brain-grippe.

It was no uncommon thing in the signal-tower, when one of the three wanted a day off, for the other two to double up on twelve-hour shifts. As long as the service was well performed, the Superintendent asked no questions.

"I guess we can stand it a few days until Matt gets 'round," said Fred Joyce as he handed over his pipe and his duties to his relief. Joe Stringer nodded. He was a tall fellow with character lines upon a face that once had been of the laughing and careless mould, but which nine years of responsibility had now dignified. His blue eyes were deep-set and serious and piercing, like those of a seaman. With practised adroitness he threw three heavy levers and shoved them back to their places with his foot.

"Let her go," he said; "we don't want no stranger stuck on us in here. I can stand it as long as you can. I guess Matt 'll be 'round soon."

With a confident expression upon his face he started at four in the afternoon on his new time.

At four o'clock in the morning he was relieved. Fred came in, saying that Matt's brain was improving, and that he would come around in a few days perhaps. Joe Stringer passed over a couple of train orders, and without talk started home. He was impatient to throw off the long strain. He felt it more than usual. Generally he came in at midnight, and his wife had a cold supper waiting for him in the kitchen. He was careful not to wake her nor the baby.

Joe Stringer lived about a half mile from the tower. His cottage was on the other side of the river, past a boat-house with a flag-pole and a willow-tree; the house lay a hundred yards or so back from the stream on an oak knoll. In winter his eyes, trained to the smallest signal on the distant poles, could easily distinguish his white gables in an opening among the trees. Evening after evening as he stood to his levers he watched for the first gleam from the lamps; and the last thing when his wife went to bed, she signalled to him from the low second story window, telegraphing with a light as he had taught her.

It was such a cosey home! His wife was perfectly happy there in summer. The abundant shade, and the endless variety of boats and parties upon the river, and the echo of mad laughter and songs at night pleased her. It was a very gay river. But in winter Joe's home was a trifle remote, and he tried to make it up to Mary in home attention and tenderness, during the daytime, so that she should not be lonely at night. He had not yet forgotten, as some men do after a few years of married life, how he had wooed his wife; how he had won her, when he was a telegraph-operator, away from the conductor of a Western express. Surely he had made her happy? And she deserved a hundred times the love he was not tired of lavishing upon her. And then, their home was nearly paid for.

Joe walked up the frozen river in the dead, dark night, avoiding the well-known air-holes, and thinking about Matt, and how not to wake the baby. There was a light upstairs that he did not understand. He pushed in through the back door softly. The kitchen was warm; the water in the kettle was singing. But his usual supper was not spread. Surprised at this neglect, he passed into the front hall to call upstairs. His arctics and rough ulster were still on.

"Is that you? Oh, Joe! Sh——!" There, at the head of the straight, steep stairs, stood his wife. The lamp in her hand lit a face pale and frightened. "Oh, Joe! where have you been all this time? I expected you at twelve."

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She put the lamp down on the floor and sat on the first stair and burst into tears.

Joe bounded up.

"Mary! What is it? For God's sake! It isn't the baby?" He took up the lamp and followed her into their room. He ran to the crib. There lay their baby, their only child, strangling for breath.

"What's the matter?" asked Joe, stupidly.

"Croup!" All the horror of a young mother for that word was in her tone. "He'll die! He'll die! God is going to take away my baby."

"He sha'n't do it," observed Joe, setting his teeth. He started forward to take up the child tenderly, to fold it under his ulster. He couldn't wait to take that off, he felt so. But she snatched his hands away:

"Doctor says he mustn't be moved. Don't you touch him, Joe! Leave him in his crib; he'll get a chill. Why, your cold overcoat might chill him to death."

"Well," said Joe, abashed and backing away, "I never thought of that. Anyhow, I'll take care of him. You go rest, Mary. I'll call you if he gets worse. Poor dear, you are so tired! Don't you fret, Mary. I say he's *got* to get well."

He led his wife to their bed, and covered her up. She was worn out with fright and care, and fell suddenly asleep. All through the cold dawn, far into the gray morning, Joe watched the baby, rocking the crib, and doing what he could. The child was quieter with him. He was such a tender man, instinctively knowing what the baby wanted.

When Mary opened her eyes, long past breakfast-time, the sight of the brown ulster and the sound of the terrible croup chased the confused memories from her aching head. Joe's blue eyes were feverish and brilliant.

"If you will take baby," he said slowly, "I will light the fire. He's easier now. You see Matt is down, and Fred and I are taking his time. Mebbe I'd ought to get a wink or two today.—I guess that's the doctor's sleigh."

. . . . . .

It was exactly four o'clock to the minute when Joe Stringer entered the tower. It was forty-eight hours since he had started on his first twelve-hour time to relieve Matt. It was thirty-six hours since he had gone home to find the baby dying. This was then his third shift of twelve hours, and Matt was said to have a relapse.

A signal-man is not on hand one minute too soon or one minute too late. Twelve hours of responsibility demand the quality of being "on time" which is imperative in the railroad world, and so rare outside of it. And Joe had not slept since he took Matt's time. The previous shift had gone well enough. His regular habits and the excitement had kept him to his duty. But this afternoon he came up the stairs, pale, haggard, and ghastly, and confronted the inexorable row of levers. For the first time in his life he loathed the tower and its peremptory call to nervous activity.

That baby—dying at home! He could see it writhe. His mental sight contemplated the child's death-agony continually. Yet at the resistless stroke of the hour of four he could no more stay at home than if he were handcuffed and dragged to prison.

Now, for the first time in nine years that straight row of levers, the red, the blue, the green, and the black, became blurred to his eyes and meaningless to his mind, just as they would have to a visitor's. Joe Stringer brushed his hand over his forehead with a trembling, irresolute motion, and then began his duties by mechanically pulling the cord above his head. The electric bell was persistently ringing the approach of an express, now due and out of sight around the upcurve a mile or more away. Joe jerked the shut-off peremptorily. The bell impertinently rang on. Again he gave the cord a pull. It seemed as if he could not bear the rattle. It wrought a new confusion in his head, and with a final twitch he snapped out an oath.

"Ye hit her that time, Joe," said his mate, taking a firm hand off the distant signal. "There's 72 waiting for water; the 'commodation is twenty minutes. I think it's a-goin' to snow."

He held out his hot pipe, as he was

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wont, to Joe, and turned to put on his overcoat. But Joe was peering out of the side window, toward the white, gabled cottage, beyond the boat-house, up the river. It could be plainly seen through the branch of the willow-tree that the curtain in the second story was up. Although Fred Joyce did not see Joe's face, the hopelessness of its stare and the twitching outline of its shrunken cheek refined the signal man's imagination. His pipe fell from his outstretched hand.

"Why, Joe!" he cried, "is the kid worse?"

Joe nodded slowly, and when he turned to set the signals at safety for the express, Fred saw that his eyes were full.

"Yes, Fred; the doctor says he's a-goin' to die. Mary is goin' to pull the curtain down when he's gone."

The express swept by, and the tower vibrated.

"Ain't ye had no sleep, Joe?" Fred Joyce had been watching his mate critically as Joe set the signals back at danger with automatic listlessness. Joyce himself was pale and overworked. It was no light thing to be on duty twelve hours on a stretch in that station. Even he was almost exhausted.

"No," answered Joe, curtly. "*She* had to sleep, an' I rocked the baby. I hain't had none yet."

"Look here, Joe," said Joyce, putting his hand on Joe's arm, "do you mean to say you hain't slept at all durin' my shift?"

"Good God! How could I?" exclaimed Joe, fiercely. "She had to sleep, I tell you, and then I had to tend the baby and the house. I couldn't have slept nohow with the baby makin' that noise in its throat—poor thing! Poor little thing!" He unlocked a switch, and flung it back with a resonant thud, and then, in the phrase of the tower, "gave 'em" the signal. A gravel-train staggered slowly down the side track.

It was beginning to snow. The flakes would come coquettishly, a few at a time, and then hold up. At this moment a little flurry swept by the tower, and obscured from view Joe's house on the other side of the river in the grove of skeleton oaks. The boat-house vanished, and the flag-pole with it. Even the willow was blotted from sight. Fred had put on his arctics and overcoat, and now came up to the other end of the tower. For an instant he stood with his hand resting on the signal called the route. Joe was standing near him by the window. Plainly he was enduring the terrible. If he only knew whether the baby were alive or dead, he could have borne the strain for one more night before he dropped. But that cloud of snow, shutting him away from the death-signal at home—it was more than his beaten courage could bear. He uttered a dry groan.

Joyce gave one more glance at the shaking figure, and then, shutting his lips, sat down at the telegraph instrument. Joe's trained ear caught the message as it started over the wire.

"I ain't no boy!" He came up to the table and brought his fist down upon it so hard that the clay pipe danced a jig. "I say, I can stand it like a man to-night. I won't have you wire the Superintendent for relief. You stop it! I say I ain't no boy." He glared out of bloodshot eyes at his mate.

Now Fred Joyce looked at him with real apprehension. Joe was no spendthrift of oaths and temper, like the rest of them. He was sunny, and of wholesome disposition. The thought that grief and sleeplessness had unbalanced him flitted across the operator's mind. His first impulse had been to relieve Joe for Joe's own sake; but now a darker anxiety possessed his mind. Joe must be relieved for the sake of the Road. So much was growing clear. A man who had not slept for forty-eight hours was in no fit condition to control the night traffic. The experienced signal-man thought it unsafe.

"If he can send up a sub only for the night, you can go home and see yer kid," said Fred, telegraphing vigorously. But Joe had gone to the window, and moodily shook his head.

"Click. Clicketty-click. Click-*click*." The telegraph jerked out the answer decidedly.

"I told ye so," said Joe, fiercely. "Now, ye'd better go home." He threw five levers backward and forward in

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rattling succession. The freight swung on to track No. 2, and puffed inward. Impulsively Joe threw the signals back to danger. His face was listless and pinched. It was almost expressionless, and would have been quite so, but for something that crossed his fixed and staring eyes.

The Superintendent had wired back that he was sorry, but he was tied up and could send no one to-night. It was impossible; but he would try to get a man there at eight the next morning. There was no help for it.

"Look here, Joe," said Fred, with a look of great disappointment. "I'm going home, and I will spell you at eleven. I'll turn right in, and seven hours is good 'nough for me. I guess you can stand that, hey?"

Joe stood with his right foot on the latch, and his right hand rigidly clasping one of the black levers. The snow flurry had passed, and his cottage was clean-cut in the distance. The curtain in the gable window was up, and the baby was still alive. Fred's glance followed his companion's. He waited for an answer, reluctant to leave. Then with an oath, more of sympathy than of impatience, he tramped downstairs. Joe had not heard him go. Somehow his senses could grasp but one detail at a time. When he turned he found himself alone. He drew a deep breath.

To-day he was glad to be alone. After all, the service in the signal-tower was monotonously exciting. Each day brought the same trains, the same combinations and complications. The signal-man was the intellect of the line at Sumach Junction. He had to be alert, masterful and imaginative. Enormous interests were subject to his fidelity and control. Therefore he is a picked man. For him to render a false signal became a capital crime. The engineer who disobeyed a signal was liable to dismissal, if not to imprisonment on the charge of manslaughter. What respect must he not have for the signal-giver himself? Matt was impatient sometimes, and let down the windows, and swore at the engineers. Joe did not. Yet it is remembered that once upon a time he gave an open signal for a side-tracked freight to proceed inward, and when it refused to obey and go, he unlocked the switch and set the little semaphore at danger, and held the freight there for five hours, until the engineer came up and humbly apologized and begged to be let off, for he was paid by the trip. When Joe ordered he was not to be trifled with. His steel levers were steel lips, and woe to him who disobeyed their sacred command. But this successive and, at night-time, progressive responsibility, this feverish repetition, became dull. Callers were apt to be many, and were welcomed as a relief to the fussy tedium.

For the first time this afternoon Joe prayed that no one would come. He felt that he had the hardest struggle of his life before him. It seemed to him that he could not bear the warm greetings, the rough jokes, the trenchant gossip, even the ready sympathy or the sudden train orders which were wont to deluge him with eager rapidity. What was comfort to him three days ago became vivisection now. To-night he needed all his nerves concentrated on those pitiless levers. A word, so tremulous his mind, might precipitate it. He was like a man taking nitrous oxide. He knew he was conscious, but the knowledge of his consciousness was like a dream. He began to contest the boundary of somnambulism. It was a duel between duty and dishonor, between life and death, between will and overwhelming sleep.

Now these interlocking switches protect the operator as well as the rolling stock. It was lucky that they did so, this dark afternoon; for, after Joe had let a certain train go by, he could not recall the puzzling combination, so familiar to him, by which it was despatched. And yet, when the next train rang in, the emergency evoked the law, and his trembling arms did what his brain refused.

Six o'clock came, and the station mistress climbed the stairs laboriously to tell him she had heard about the baby, and how sorry she was. She brought him a pink geranium blossom to comfort him, and went away.

Seven o'clock came, and with it his supper. A neighbor brought his pail, and told him that the baby was still

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Joe walked up the frozen river in the dead, dark night.—Page 761.

alive. The good woman found Joe so surly and distracted that she clean forgot the loving messages from Mary, Joe's wife, and, lifting up her skirts on high, she hurried down the oily, tobacco-laden stairs, muttering that he might at least have thanked her for her trouble.

The fact of it was, the bell was ringing up the approach of another train. He had become as afraid of the sound of that warning bell as he was of an engine running "wild." With heart-sinking he looked at the clock, and knew perfectly well the number of the train then due. To the railroad esoteric trains are only numbers. He was about to give this train the correct switch, when, to his consternation, his brain seemed to be going around in a huge wheel. On one of the spokes was written the number of that train, and his thoughts found it impossible to run it down. The shadow of this elusive memory darkened his whole mind. Where was he? Blindly he set the route and home signals at safety. His hands seemed to know that it was not an express approaching, and therefore there was no need to "set the distant." The head-light cast its parallel reflections at him up the track. He glared at it questioningly. Then the sound of the rumbling of many empty cars unlocked his torpid brain. Freight No. 63! Thank God, he had done the right thing. The sweat broke out upon his eyebrows and chilled his forehead. He had the muscular apprehension and the nausea that follow nervous shock and the recoil from familiar noises. He felt that he was going to be very sick. But how soon? The insidious symptoms of arbitrary drowsiness were as strange to him as the giddiness of sea-sickness.

As the freight passed he suddenly found himself upstairs in his own room, holding the gasping baby. Then he was aware of the fact that he was swaying over a precipice. With a cry he stretched out his hands. What did they clutch? Levers No. 23 and 24! He brought his head up with a start, and stared out of the side window defiantly. He was in his signal-tower, and he challenged any one who said that he slept upon his post.

Now, to his surprise, the white and

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All through the cold dawn, far into the gray morning, Joe watched the baby.—Page 762.

green and red lights seemed to be whirling around in a mad dance.

"I forgot," he said, helplessly, "I must be hungry."

It was very dark outside, and the light from the little window up the river blinked at him like a fair star. The baby was alive. Joe kissed his hand to the light, and then sat down before his tin pail at the telegraph table. He felt unutterably drowsy after the first mouthful, which happened to be a bite of mince-pie, that had been carefully laid on top so as not to spoil the crust. It was the first time that his eyes had even closed for thirty-six hours. The snow began to fall heavily, with that mysterious silence, so different from all other similar meteorological manifestations, and which gives it a magic as well as a poetic quality. Joe's head rested on the table only a few inches from the telegraph instrument. He had not been in that position five minutes before the click called him. Although his ears had not comprehended the message, perhaps not even apprehended it, his vigilant mind repeated it to him, and nagged him, until with a violent effort of his will he cast off the locking yoke of sleep. Instinctively his fingers sought the keys, while his other hand drew a blank from the drawer.

"Why don't you repeat?" came the imperative demand. It was a train order from the Superintendent. Joe became immediately alert. Every nerve

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began to quiver with responsibility. The order ran:

"To No. 114:—We understand we may use fifty-five minutes' time over train No. 20." This was signed by the Division Superintendent, the conductor, and engineer of the freight in question.

Joe gave a trivial reason for his inattention, and demanded a "repeat." When this came he repeated it back. According to the rules no order is valid until repeated and "O. K.'d"—this is the phrase—by the sender and receiver.

"O. K.," came back the message.

"O. K.," answered Joe with a sigh, signing the order on the table and shoving it away from him.

"Hullo, Joe!" There was a stamping and shaking of snow, accompanied by a strong ejaculation expressive of the state of the weather. "Hullo there! Wake up!"

It was the conductor of a "local," come in for a moment to get warm.

"I ain't asleep," snarled Joe with savage emphasis. "Wake up, yourself!"

"Now, ye'd better go home." He threw five levers backward and forward in rattling succession.—Page 763.

The conductor stared at him with great curiosity. Why, Joe was the best-natured man on the road. What had come over him?

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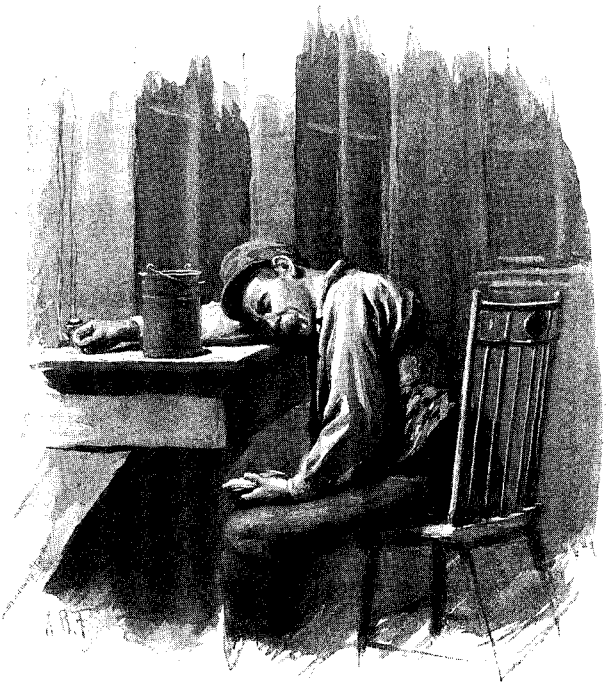
"D—— it, I didn't suppose you was. Can't you take a joke?"

"No! Not that kind," replied the signal-man with a suspicious scowl. His ears sang so loud as almost to stop their power of hearing. He steadied himself at his levers, and feeling a little ashamed of himself, for, after all, the conductor did not know that he had almost been asleep, he asked: "Well, what's up?"



Joe's head rested on the table only a few inches from the telegraph instrument.—Page 766.

"Nothing, only 20 is 1.55."

Joe nodded. "I just got the order to give 114 55."

"I guess 20 is nearer 2. The blockade must be pretty heavy in the West. How's signals working?"

"All right, so far," Joe replied, as he swung the "local" off the main line around the curve and then set the switches back to their normal positions.

"How's Matt? I hear he's stark luny with the grippe. How's your kid?" The conductor went up to the telegraph instrument and took up the half-smoked clay pipe and lighted it.

The kid? Was it possible that Joe had for a moment forgotten his dying baby? He went toward the window. His tall figure bent to look out. He dropped the upper sash with an anguished exclamation. The silent snow now came down like a dead wall between him and his wife's message. In the darkness and the density of the storm he could hardly see the other side of the four tracks. Was the child alive or dead? He paced about the room restlessly, trying all the windows. He could not even see the geraniums in the depot. He went back to the front windows of the tower. A red switch signal cast a bar of light that cut the railroad at right angles. Joe's eyes followed that clear gleam until it dissipated itself in the distance. The flakes of snow turned to drops of blood as they passed through the colored rays. Joe did not hear the conductor strike the clogged-pipe against the edge of the dusty table. He did not notice a commonplace question that was addressed to him. He was looking at the crimson flakes stupidly. His eyes became fixed. His head sat rigidly on his neck. He had often noticed crystals of gold falling before the head-light of a locomotive. But blood! Blood!

"No. 42 is 13!" The conductor, receiving no answer, had some time since hastened down to his train, and now a brakeman stamped up with this order, and beat his hat against the railing at the top of the stairs. The train-hand was about to expand this information when he was startled by a guttural cry.

"Oh! My God!"

The young man ran to the window and shook Joe's arm. The entranced signal-man turned on him lustreless eyes, whose black mirrors had inundated the blue iris.

"Is he dead?" cried Joe.

"Who dead? 'Tain't Matt, is it?

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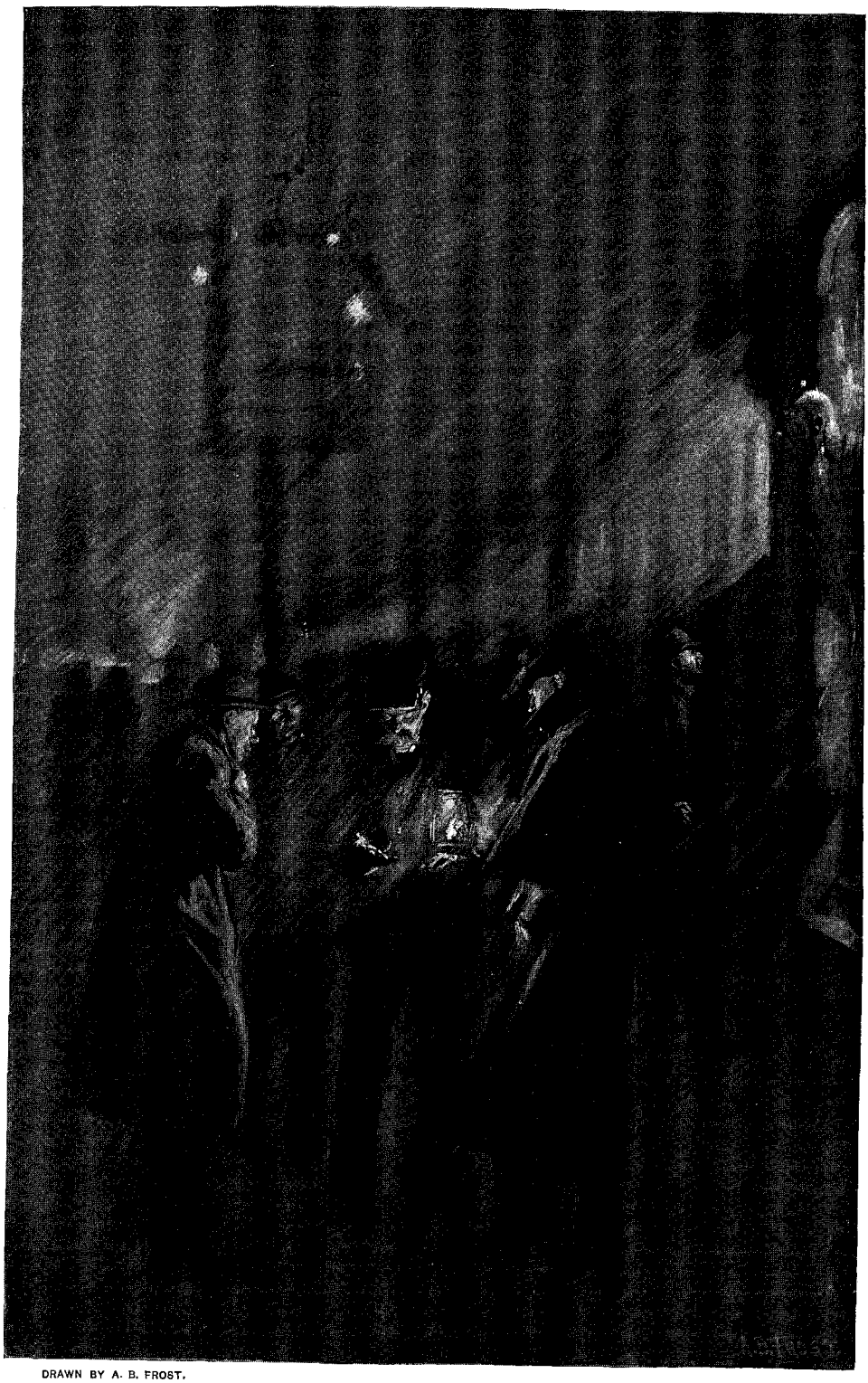

DRAWN BY A. B. FROST.

Passengers were swarming out and bothering the conductor a gineer with anxious and silly questions.—Page 772.

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"What's the matter with you? Wake up, Joe!"

"What's the matter with *you?*" Joe wrenched himself violently away. The man who had not slept for forty-eight hours suddenly saw realities with his open eyes. An expression of horror and then of wonder crossed his sunken face, just as it happens to one who comes out of a hypnotic state. "I thought——" he said slowly. "Why, Mike! Hullo! What's the news? Ha! ha! ha! D—— it, I wasn't asleep. Express No. 20 is 1.55 late, and I've got orders to give freight 114 fifty-five minutes."

Mike, the brakeman, eyed the signalman with shrewd curiosity. "He hain't drunk," he muttered to himself; "he never did drink, 'cos he's married, I s'pose. I'll bet he's got the la grippe. Are you all right now?" he said aloud. "I told you 42 is 13. Put that in your pipe and smoke it."

There came the impatient tooting of a whistle, and the brakeman, with a reluctant expression, hurried out.

Again Joe was left quite alone. No one was liable to drop in now. He glanced at the clock. It was nearly nine. He had only a little over two hours to wait for his relief. He did his best to look his situation coolly in the teeth. He felt exactly as he did once while he was going under the influence of ether. He had tried braking for a week, and got a jam in the leg. He understood his condition. He felt that he was liable to go under at any moment. Fight it! Fight it like a man! This thought whirled around his brain a hundred times, until he suddenly awoke to find that he had been battling with unconsciousness in his sleep.

The night was growing wild and wilder. The snow began to drive viciously. Joe knew that at such times as these the running schedule of the Road must necessarily be thrown completely out of gear, and that a tie-up might occur at any moment. In such contingencies it needed the sharpest wits of the man at the signal-tower to keep things moving in order.

Now, in point of fact, Joe was fully competent to be Superintendent of the Division. He had the peculiar quality of generalship that is as indispensable to railroad management as the telegraph itself. In emergencies he had saved the Road many a valuable hour by his prompt decisions and many a dollar by his strategetic combinations. It was no easy matter at Sumach Junction to know how and when to dispatch trains. It requires intuition, experience, and a steadiness of nerve that would wear out an ordinary man in a week's time. As the signals were set in their normal state "at danger," so was Joe's life keyed to apprehension.

"Five minutes," said Nelson, "may make the difference between victory and defeat." Five seconds at the signal-tower at Sumach Junction may make the difference between security and appalling death. Joe was young and courageous. He was thirty, and in the zenith of his self-confidence.

No. 42 was a New York express, and it was thirteen minutes late. It was therefore due at Sumach Junction at twenty-six minutes past nine o'clock. This great Road, which boasted of never having killed a passenger through its own negligence, never allowed its expresses to make up a minute of lost time. If the schedule were broken, trains must conform to their new time.

Then there was the freight No. 114. Since the Chicago express was an hour and fifty-five minutes late, the freight was given fifty-five minutes' run on the delinquent's time. Thus it came about that the freight was due at any time within a half hour. Joe felt as confused as any uninitiated reader of this page by all these familiar changes, and dreaded lest any more new instructions might be telegraphed him. He had a few minutes to himself, and, not knowing why, he went downstairs, and brought up one of the red lanterns that were kept lighted in the oil-room below.

"You never can tell," he said to himself.

Then he went to the western windows of the tower. The blinding snow seemed to be turning into frozen sleet. Outward the tracks wound up a hill and an inward train on track No. 2, when the bell rang its approach, could usually be seen with ease from the tower across the valley, two miles away.

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But to-night Joe could not even see the route signal. The two vertical white lights of the home signal were invisible.

That white semaphore, outstretched, dove-tailed, with its blunt finger guarding the Road, was an old friend of Joe's. When it was set horizontally at danger, Joe's easy imagination used to think that it pointed straight at his own cottage. Then he would follow the line of vision and see the curtain up; and once every hour or so during his afternoon and evening watches his wife was in the habit of waving a white handkerchief or a white light before the window, then he smiled, and knew that the home signal, though set at "danger" for the road, was set at "safety" for him. How many, many nights this pretty conceit brought comfort to the man of the steel levers! Joe loved the inward home signal with a superstition that is not unusual to railroad men. It was the

"Help me lift him up," said the doctor, in a quiet voice. "He is not dead."—Page 774.

No. 2 lever that operated it, and about the only one that never got out of order. That also was a good omen, for he and his wife never quarrelled. But to-night his baby was dying, perhaps dead, over

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there in the storm, and he felt that the home semaphore had betrayed him. He could not formulate this thought, but it pounded in his brain, and he regarded that red lever with lowering brakes, and the jerk of the standstill! What a natural world heaven is! Quick question — oaths and hurried answers, and the pounding of steps up the stairs!

"Honest, Fred. How many were killed? No one has darst tell me."—Page 775.

suspicion. He stood with one foot on the latch, with his left hand on the "distant," with his right guarding the "home," with his pipe smouldering between his teeth—he stood—he swayed—he gained his equilibrium—his lids dropped—and then he fell into a doze like a soldier who sleeps upon the march.

What strange dreams! Was he in another world? What! Railroads in heaven? The same ringing, insistent bell? The same signals? Could it be that in Paradise he had to throw the "route," and the "home," and the "distant" at safety for the express? That was not the idea of heaven to which he had been brought up in the Baptist church. Then the rumbling escape of steam. The deep inhalations of a curbed engine! The shriek of the

"Hullo there! Hullo!"

Joe awoke with a start. He thrust his hands over his eyes and turned wildly around. He had the feeling kindred to that of a wild animal at bay before human intelligence. What had he done? Good God! Had he been asleep?

"What's up? What's up?" he cried in a husky voice. Perhaps this was a dream too.

"We blew out the cylinder head," said the conductor of the New York express with a grave face. "Wire delay! We may pull out, or we may not. What a —— night to get stuck! I'll let you know later."

Joe rushed to the front windows. Passengers were swarming out and bothering the conductor and engineer with anxious and silly questions.

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The roar of steam, vibrating as if there were a tunnel under the track; the lights from the brilliant parlor-car windows athwart the sardonic snow; the discontented faces of aristocratic ladies peering out of mahogany frames; the increasing groups of men as they flocked in the storm to the engine; the flickering oil torch lighting up the strong and sober face of the engineer; the elegant conductor looking at his watch calculatingly in the light of his own lantern; the passengers huddling behind and around him in the blast—these formed a series of pictures that engraved themselves upon Joe's excited mind. It seemed to Joe that the express had been flung at him as if from a dark stage trap.

But how did the train get there? How could it disobey the danger signals? Joe jumped to his levers.

As has been said, all signals are kept at danger, and unless they are set to safety, the train must stop before them. When a train approaches on a clear track, the signals are set at safety toward it: first the "route," next the "home," and last the "distant." As the last car passes the drooping semaphores successively, these wooden fingers are raised to danger again in reverse order: first the "distant," next the "home," and last the "route," which is adjacent to the signal-tower itself.

Joe stared at the levers. His tortured, sleepless brain had not dreamed a dream; for the distant signal, No. 1, was thrown back to danger, and the red home and route were still at safety, showing that a train had been sent through. Joe had done his duty while his body slept, and he had been awakened even while he was about to clang back the "home" to danger. He could not recall the facts; but the unlying levers confronted him with their steel story.

Instantly he threw the whole weight of his body on the home lever, to cast it back. The red bar started, it yielded, and then, as if it had encountered an irresistible spring, it halted midway. Joe brought the lever back, and regarded it incredulously. No. 23 had often stuck this way, but No. 2 never. With an oath he cast himself at it. He put up his foot to push it; he tugged, and stopped for breath, and massed his weight again. But the lever refused to work, and the home signal remained at safety with that diabolical persistency that surprises us in soulless things. Joe stepped back and looked darkly at the mutinous signal. Should the home be allowed to show two perpendicular green lights—a clear track—when the express was stalled two hundred yards the other side on the same rails? For life's sake, no!

Then the Superintendent's order inundated his mind. He had clean forgotten it—"No. 114 had fifty-five minutes time over No. 20. No. 114 was the freight, my God!"

"Ring—ring—ring—ring—ring!" the electric bell announced the approach of the train far up the grade, two miles away.

At that terrible sound Joe's face took on a ghastly pallor. Now, at last, he was thoroughly awake. Well he knew that freights never mind the distant semaphore. That is the warning for expresses. Its level threat would convey no presage of evil to the engineer of that maledicted freight. Nearer still stood the two perpendicular green lights of the "home" blinking, as if to say, "Go on! Safety! A free track!" and upon that "free track" stood the disabled express.

Joe assaulted the lever again: his muscles cracked; his veins became undulating mounds; sweat blinded his eyes. But the lever refused.

Now, madly, the signal-man tried to switch the oncoming freight upon the accommodation track, that diverged from the bridge. But he could not stir the rod. That open signal had locked the switch peremptorily. Then Joe breathed heavily, and stood for one awful second to marshal his tired thoughts. The ice had clogged the wire. That was it. Ice! A hammer! a bar! to pull out the pin and disconnect the lock, and then there might be time to throw the switch.

Only the station mistress, peering between her geranium-leaves to watch the blockade, noticed a wild figure bounding from the tower, down the platform,

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hatless, with a red lantern swaying in one hand, with the other grasping a hammer and an old file. A few of the passengers saw the gleam of Joe's red light. And a brakeman, who had been ordered back to flag the track, noticing the lantern disappearing in the sleet up the track, thought the order already fulfilled which had been given to him.

Joe floundered through the drifts. He stumbled, he shut his teeth, he fell upon his knees, the ice cut his hands; but now his face began to shine with the hero's smile.

What was that? The distant, stertorous puffing of the freight, plunging full speed down grade, down the icy tracks.

"A mile away!" said Joe to himself. "Oh, for a minute more!"

Flailed by the storm, Joe cast himself at the home signal. There, above him, the finger of the dejected semaphore for the first time failed to point at his own home. His eyes glanced at it fiercely. Now he hated the semaphore, the traitor, and he attacked it like a tiger. Hammer and file! Blow upon blow! The pin holds! The end of the file slips! There is the rumble of the freight! And there is the freight itself! One more blow, and another. It gives! It yields! The pin drops to the drift, and the semaphore rises by its own weight sullenly to place. Now swiftly, God be praised! the two vertical white lights, that signify "Danger! Halt!" swing into position, and replace the green.

The headlight gilds the snow. But Joe in his exaltation had ceased to think of himself. He neither cared nor knew which was track No. 2. He stood like a spectre upon the sleepers, facing the monster, and swinging the red lantern furiously. Thus men stormed the Redan.

Now it was that the engineer saw the danger signal for the first time; and in the centre of that red circumference he caught the white reflection of a glorified face. For an instant the locomotive tried to halt; then there was a dull blow, and the frightful staccato whistle calling "Down brakes!" shattered the crystal flakes. Even air-brakes would not have availed for the ice and grade; and the train, barely checked of her momentum, dashed on to collision.

. . . . . .

When it was all over a procession of three men, each with a white lantern, ploughed up the track. One of these was the engineer of the freight, who had, the Lord knew how, escaped with his life and limbs. The conductor of the express followed him, and a doctor who happened to be on the train came along quietly.

"He was struck near the home," said the engineer, slowly. "I saw the two whites come up, an' him swingin' in the middle of the track."

They came to the home signal. The unconscious snow had already covered the tracks lightly, so that there was no blood visible. For a few moments they looked in vain. Then the engineer glanced up at the semaphore. As if ashamed of itself, and mourning for its part in the catastrophe, the senseless thing stood apologetically with its dingy arm stretched at last to danger. Instinctively the engineer followed with the light of his lantern the direction of that persistent finger. It pointed to a snow-drift on the other side of the track. The engineer went over, flashing his light. The conductor followed. There, at the foot of the short embankment, partly covered by the drift, lay Joe. The three men surrounded him solemnly; the doctor knelt beside him in the snow.

"Help me lift him up," said the doctor, in a quiet voice. "He is not dead."

. . . . . .

Even as the morning sun began to tire of an evident lack of appreciation, and was about to hurry around to another window where the shade *was* up, Joe opened his eyes slowly. Across the foot of his bed was thrust a lance of light, that had stolen to his breast through a rift in the curtain. In that single ray Joe watched brigades of dust, rising, falling, never ceasing, ever-disappearing. How like little lives these atoms were! How like his own, himself! Struggling for or falling by chance into the light, and then propelled by an imperious current, against

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the will, into an abyss, never to be seen again. Occupied with this unwonted philosophy, Joe's mind began to clarify, and by detachments his memory began to come back. He tried to lift up his head. It swam so that he sank back with a groan.

Hurrying in at the sound came Mary, his wife.

"Well, Joe!" she said. With the thoughtlessness of a healthy woman she threw up the shade. It is a question whether the wife or the sun kissed the pale face first.

Joe winced at the glare, and then looked at his wife's worn features tenderly. He was surprised at her cheerfulness. He hardly dared to say what was on his lips. But he knew it must come.

"I'm sorry," he said, with effort; "I'm afraid I can't attend."

"You don't need to." So said Mary, not in the least understanding what he meant, but speaking in that peculiar tone which is supposed to make a patient think that he was never better in his life. "You have been quite sick Joe, and the doctor says you'll be up in a month."

Joe regarded her helplessly. Then he began to be angry at her heartlessness.

"We haven't been to church regular, but I guess Reverend Peck will officiate all right if he is asked."

"Why, Joe dear, what do you mean?" She bent over him anxiously.

"Is the grave dug, Mary?" demanded the sick man. His lips quivered with deep emotion.

"Why, Joe!" cried Mary. Consternation sat upon her face. Was he "wandering" again?

"When people die they have to be buried," urged Joe with some indignation. "Where have you laid the little fellar? In the spare room? I'm afraid I couldn't get down into the settin'-room to see him; I'd like to see him—once—before—"

"Oh, Joe! Why, Joe! Dear Joe!" Mary his wife, the mother of their only child, their dead baby, looked at him, and broke into high, hysteric laughter. An expression of horror knotted itself into Joe's scarred forehead. Had grief and watching turned *her* mind? But Mary kissed the knot away, and said:

"That was four weeks ago, Joe; and he didn't. He got well!"

Joe stared at his wife. Then an expression of bewilderment, followed by another of exquisite happiness and content, crossed and conquered his bruised face, as through the open door there came the moist gurgle of an infant's voice chased by a shrill and happy laugh.

But Joe did not get well as rapidly as they expected. With only a fracture of the leg and concussion of the brain, the doctor argued obstinately that he ought to be out in a month. But Mary saw that he had a weight upon his mind. Even the baby's little warm fingers could not lift it.

At the foot of the stairs one day, a big whisper asked:

"How is he?"

"It's Fred Joyce," said the sick man, feeling very weak at the sound of the voice. "Let him come up."

The signal-man came up as softly as he could.

"I want to speak to him alone, Mary," said Joe, putting out his hand from under the coverlid feebly. "Sit down, Fred."

"Well, I'm glad to see yer looking so well," said his mate, cheerfully, not knowing what else to say.

Joe closed his eyes. He was evidently collecting his strength to say something very important. He opened his eyes; his courage failed; he sighed, and then he blurted out, in his hollow voice:

"Honest, Fred. How many were killed? No one has darst tell me." Not daring to look, he turned his face away.

"Killed? Who killed?" answered Fred, with what Joe took to be the evasion thought proper for the sick.

"114," came the strained reply. Joe could hardly move his stiffened lips.

"Oh," said the signal-man smiling, "you mean that night, 114 and 42?"

Joe's eyes gave a timid assent.

"Why, not a man of 'em. *They* was all right," said Fred. "I'll have to tell you," he added. "I was kinder worried about you that evening, you remember, and I started over before ten, think-

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ing I'd relieve you. So, on the platform who should I meet but the depot mistress, comin' out with a shawl over her head, and kind o' wild. 'Mis' Paisley,' says I, 'what the —— is the matter?' 'Look for yourself,' says she, and she pointed up'ard to the tower. You could have knocked me down with a feather when I found you wa'n't up there. I saw you'd left No. 2 down and I tried to throw it back, and then I knew what was up. The hammer and bar was gone, and I guessed you was out there fixin' of it. So I kept my hand on it to give it the grand chuck, you bet, when you got the pin out. Then I heard the freight, and knew hell was comin'. You done that jest in time, Joe. If you hadn't done it then, there'd been as pretty a smash-up as we've ever had on this section. God! I throwed No. 6, an' then gave 'em track No. 4. 114 she struck the switch jest as I mashed it over. That damn lever nigh knocked the life out'n me. I don't want to see nothin' like it as long as I live. I've got gray hairs since, my wife says. And you saved the train, Joe."

"But if you hadn't been there, Fred, I might have been up for manslaughter." Joe touched his mate's hand impulsively.

"That's all rot," said Fred with expressive modesty.

Joe's eyes were closed and his hands were locked tight, like the switches themselves. He lay silent for a long time. Fred started to go. The baby crowed in the next room.

"Say, Fred." Joe did not want his friend to see how deeply he feared to ask the crucial question. But it had to come. "Say, who's got my place?"

Fred laughed aloud. "No one, me boy." He slapped his own knee boisterously. "Me and Matt—Matt's well, you know—we're holding of it for you. You want to hurry up and get well now."

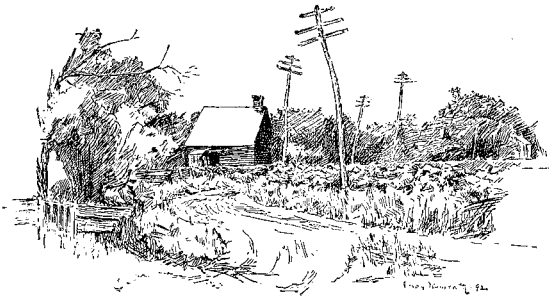
"But how about my bein' asleep?"

"I ain't heard nothin' about it," interrupted Fred quickly.

"But what—" Joe stopped because his breath suffocated him. "What's the Company done to me?"

Fred looked at the hero, whom the newspapers had not yet grown tired of lauding for his courage and his self-sacrifice, and, as he looked, a tender smile crossed his face. Such is not often seen on men of his kind, but Fred Joyce wore it well. He took Joe's white hand, and, rising, said:

"The Company? Don't you know? Why, they've given you a raise."



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VOICES AND VISIONS.

A PRELUDE TO A BOOK OF VERSE.

In youth, beside the lonely sea,
Voices and visions came to me.

Titania and her furtive broods
Were my familiars in the woods.

From every flower that broke in flame,
Some half-articulate whisper came.

In every wind I felt the stir
Of some celestial messenger.

Later, amid the city's din
And toil and wealth and want and sin,

They followed me from street to street,
The dreams that made my boyhood sweet.

As in the silence-haunted glen,
So, mid the crowded ways of men

Strange lights my errant fancy led,
Strange watchers watched beside my bed.

Ill fortune had no shafts for me
In this aërial company.

Now one by one the visions fly,
And one by one the voices die.

More distantly the accents ring,
More frequent the receding wing.

Full dark shall be the days in store,
When voice and vision come no more!

THOMAS BAILEY ALDRICH.

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VALE.

By Graham R. Tomson.

The rock-doves grieve the golden noontide still—
  Deep in the darkened grove, with querulous moan,
Ever they call me from this wooded hill
  Where I sit all alone.

The autumn world seems sorrowful and strange,
  Though hung with gold and steeped in mellow light;
Throughout there menaces a cloud of change,
  An end of all delight.

No more the swallows wheel about the sky,
  No more the blackbird whistles in the dew;
Both rose and nightingale are gone—and I
  Would follow summer too.

The ash-tree keys hang rusting on the boughs;
  Sad and insistent as an ancient tune,
Over and o'er through summer's empty house
  Echoes the rock-doves' rune.

Fain would I follow, at their drowsy call,
  By shadowy grades and plaintive tinkling streams,
Where never wind doth sway the tree-tops tall,
  Nor earthly sun-ray gleams.

I would not watch another autumn fade,
  Vext with shrill winds and stung with vain regret;
Be it mine to seek the inviolable shade,
  And—maybe—to forget.

Loosed from the narrow prison of days and nights,
  Set free from Reason's rigorous castle-keep—
Roaming by misty valleys and dim heights—
  The hollows and hills of sleep.

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HOW THE CAPTAIN MADE CHRISTMAS.

By Thomas Nelson Page.

It was just a few days before Christmas, and the men around the large fire-place at the club had not unnaturally fallen to talking of Christmas. They were all men in the prime of life, and all or nearly all of them were from other parts of the country; men who had come to the great city to make their way in life, and who had, on the whole, made it in one degree or another, achieving sufficient success in different fields to allow of all being called successful men. Yet, as the conversation had proceeded, it had taken a reminicent turn. When it began, only three persons were engaged in it, two of whom, McPheeters and Lesponts, were in lounging chairs, with their feet stretched out toward the log fire, while the third, Newton, stood with his back to the great hearth, and his coat-tails well divided. The other men were scattered about the room, one or two writing at tables, three or four reading the evening papers, and the rest talking and sipping whiskey and water, or only talking or only sipping whiskey and water. As the conversation proceeded, however, one after another joined the group around the fire-place, until the circle included every man in the room.

It had begun by Lesponts, who had been looking intently at Newton for some moments as he stood before the fire with his eyes fastened on the carpet, breaking the silence by asking, suddenly: "Are you going home?"

"I don't know," said Newton, doubtfully, recalled from somewhere in dreamland, but so slowly that a part of his thoughts were still lingering there. "I haven't made up my mind—I'm not sure that I can go so far as Virginia, and I have an invitation to a delightful place—a house-party near here."

"Newton, anybody would know that you were a Virginian," said McPheeters, "by the way you stand before that fire."

Newton said, "Yes," and then, as the half smile the charge had brought up died away, he said, slowly, "I was just thinking how good it felt, and I had gone back and was standing in the old parlor at home the first time I ever noticed my father doing it; I remember getting up and standing by him, trying to stand just as he did, and I was feeling the fire, just now, just as I did that night.—That was thirty-three years ago," said Newton, slowly, as if he were doling the years from his memory.

"Newton, is your father living?" asked Lesponts. "No, but my mother is," he said, "she still lives at the old home in the country."

From this the talk had gone on, and nearly all had contributed to it, even the most reticent of them, drawn out by the universal sympathy which the subject had called forth. The great city, with all its manifold interests was forgotten, and the men of the world went back to their childhood and early life, in little villages or on old plantations, and told incidents of the time when the outer world was unknown, and all things had those strange and large

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proportions which the mind of childhood gives. Old times were ransacked and Christmas experiences in them were given without stint, and the season was voted, without dissent, to have been far ahead of Christmas now. Presently one of the party said: "Did any of you ever spend a Christmas on the cars? If you have not, thank Heaven, and pray to be preserved from it henceforth, for I've done it, and I tell you it's next to purgatory. I spent one once, stuck in a snow-drift, or almost stuck, for we were ten hours late, and missed all connections, and the Christmas I had expected to spend with friends, I passed in a nasty car with a surly Pullman conductor, an impudent mulatto porter, and a lot of fools, all of whom could have murdered each other, not to speak of a crying baby whose murder was perhaps the only thing all would have united on." This harsh speech showed that the subject was about exhausted, and someone, a man who had come in only in time to hear the last speaker, had just hazarded the remark, in a faint imitation of an English accent, that the sub-officials in this country were a surly, ill-conditioned lot, anyhow, and always were as rude as they dared to be, when Lesponts, who had looked at the speaker lazily, said:

"Yes, I have spent a Christmas on a sleeping-car, and, strange to say, I have a most delightful recollection of it." This was surprising enough to have gained him a hearing anyhow, but the memory of the occasion was evidently sufficiently strong to carry Lesponts over obstacles, and he went ahead.

"Has any of you ever taken the night-train that goes from here South through the Cumberland and Shenandoah Valleys, or from Washington to strike that train?"

No one seemed to have done so, and he went on:

"Well, do it, and you can even do it Christmas, if you get the right conductor. It's well worth doing the first chance you get, for it's almost the prettiest country in the world that you go through; there is nothing that I've ever seen lovelier than parts of the Cumberland and Shenandoah Valleys, and the New River Valley is just as pretty, that background of blue beyond those rolling hills and, all, you know, McPheeters?" McPheeters nodded, and he proceeded: "I always go that way now when I go South. Well, I went South one winter just at Christmas, and I took that train by accident. I was going to New Orleans to spend Christmas, and had expected to have gotten off to be there several days beforehand, but an unlooked-for matter had turned up and prevented my getting off, and I had given up the idea of going, when I changed my mind: the fact is, I was in a row with a friend of mine there. I decided, on the spur of the moment, to go, anyhow, and thus got off on the afternoon train for Washington, intending to run my luck for getting a sleeper there. This was the day before Christmas-eve and I was due to arrive in New Orleans Christmas-day, some time. Well, when I got to Washington there was not a berth to be had for love or money, and I was in a pickle. I fumed and fussed; abused the railroad companies and got mad with the ticket agent, who seemed, I thought, to be very indifferent as to whether I went to New Orleans or not, and I had just decided to turn around and come back to New York, when the agent, who was making change for someone else, said: 'I'm not positive, but I think there's a train on such and such a road, and you may be able to get a berth on that. It leaves about this time, and if you hurry you may be able to catch it.' He looked at his watch: 'Yes, you've just about time to stand a chance, everything is late to-day, there are such crowds, and the snow and all.' I thanked him, feeling like a dog over my ill-temper and rudeness to him, and decided to try. Anything was better than New York, Christmas-day. So I jumped into a carriage and told the driver to drive like the—the wind, and he did. When we arrived at the station the ticket agent could not tell me whether I could get a berth or not, the conductor had the diagram out at the train, but he thought there was not the slightest chance. I had gotten warmed up, however, by my friend's

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civility at the other station, and I meant to go if there was any way to do it, so I grabbed up my bags and rushed out of the warm depot into the cold air again. I found the car and the conductor standing outside of it by the steps. The first thing that struck me was his appearance. Instead of being the dapper young naval-officerish-looking fellow I was accustomed to, he was a stout, elderly man, with bushy gray hair and a heavy grizzled mustache, who looked like an old field-marshal. He was surrounded by quite a number of people all crowding about him and asking him questions at once, some of whose questions he was answering slowly as he pored over his diagram, and others of which he seemed to be ignoring. Some were querulous, some good-natured, and all impatient, but he answered them with imperturbable good humor. It was very cold, so I pushed my way into the crowd. As I did so I heard him say to someone: 'You asked me if the lower berths were all taken, did you not?' 'Yes, five minutes ago!' snapped the fellow, whom I had heard swearing, on the edge of the circle. 'Well, they are all taken, just as they were the first time I told you they were,' he said, and opened a despatch given him by his porter, a tall, black, elderly negro with gray hair. I pushed my way in and asked him, in my most dulcet tone, if I could get an upper berth to New Orleans. I called him 'Captain,' thinking him a pompous old fellow, and that probably he would be flattered by the title. He was just beginning to speak to someone else, but I caught him and he looked across the crowd and said 'New Orleans!' My heart sank at the tone, and he went on talking to the other man. 'I told you that I would give you a lower berth, sir, I can give you one now, I have just got a message that the person who had lower two will not want it.' 'Hold on, then, I'll take that lower,' called the man who had spoken before, over the crowd, 'I spoke for it first.' 'No you won't,' said the Captain, who went on writing. He pushed his way in angrily, a big, self-assertive fellow; he was evidently smarting from his first repulse. 'What's that? I did, I say. I was here before that man got here, and asked you for a lower berth, and you said they were all taken.' The Captain stopped and looked at him. 'My dear sir, I know you did; but this gentleman has a lady along.' But the fellow was angry. 'I don't care,' he said, 'I engaged the berth and I know my rights; I mean to have that lower, or I'll see which is bigger, you or Mr. Pullman.' Just then a lady, who had come out on the steps, spoke to the Captain about her seat in the car. He turned to her: 'My dear madam, you are all right, just go in there and take your seat anywhere; when I come in I will fix everything. Go straight into that car and don't come out in this cold air any more.' The lady went back and the old fellow said, 'Nick, go in there and seat that lady, if you have to turn every man out of his seat.' Then, as the porter went in, he turned back to his irate friend. 'Now, my dear sir, you don't mean that: you'd be the first man to give up your berth; this gentleman has his sick wife with him and has been ordered to take her South immediately, and she's going to have a lower berth if I turn every man in that car out, and if you were Mr. Pullman himself I'd tell you the same thing.' The man fell back, baffled and humbled, and we all enjoyed it. Still, I was without a berth, so, with some misgiving, I began: 'Captain?' He turned to me. 'Oh! you want to go to New Orleans?' 'Yes, to spend Christmas, any chance for me?' He looked at his watch. 'My dear young sir,' he said, 'go into the car and take a seat, and I'll do the best I can with you.' I went in, not at all sure that I should get a berth. This, of course, was only a part of what went on, but the crowd had gotten into a good humor and was joking, and I had fallen into the same spirit. The first person I looked for when I entered the car was, of course, the sick woman. I soon picked her out; a sweet, frail-looking lady, with that fatal, transparent hue of skin and fine complexion. She was all muffled up, although the car was very warm. Every seat was either occu-

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pied or piled high with bags. Well, the train started, and in a little while the Captain came in, and the way that old fellow straightened things out was a revelation. He took charge of the car and ran it as if he had been the Captain of a boat. At first some of the passengers were inclined to grumble, but in a little while they gave in. As for me, I had gotten an upper berth and felt satisfied. When I waked up next morning, however, we were only a hundred and fifty miles from Washington, and were standing still. The next day was Christmas, and every passenger on the train, except the sick lady and her husband, and the Captain, had an engagement for Christmas dinner somewhere a thousand miles away. There had been an accident on the road. The train which was coming north had jumped the track at a trestle and torn a part of it away. Two or three of the trainmen had been hurt. There was no chance of getting by for several hours more. It was a blue party that assembled in the dressing-room, and more than one cursed his luck. One man was talking of suing the company. I was feeling pretty gloomy myself, when the Captain came in. 'Well, gentlemen, good morning; it's a fine morning, you must go out and taste it,' he said, in a cheery voice, which made me feel fresher and better at once, and which brought a response from every man in the dressing-room. Someone asked promptly how long we should be there. 'I can't tell you, sir; but some little time; several hours.' There was a groan. 'You'll have time to go over the battle-field,' said the Captain, still cheerily. 'We are close to the field of one of the bitterest battles of the war.' And then he proceeded to tell us about it briefly. He said, in answer to a question, that he had been in it. 'On which side, Captain?' asked someone. 'Sir!' with some surprise in his voice, 'On which side?' 'On our side, sir, of course.' We decided to go over the field, and after breakfast we did.

The Captain walked with us over the ground and showed us the lines of attack and defence; pointed out where the heaviest fighting was done, and gave a graphic account of the whole campaign. It was the only battle-field I ever went over, and I was so much interested that when I got home I read up the campaign, and that set me to reading up on the whole subject of the war. We walked back over the hills and I never enjoyed a walk more. I felt as if I had got new strength from the cold air. The old fellow stopped at a little house on our way back, and went in whilst we waited. When he came out he had a little bouquet of geranium leaves and lemon verbena which he had got, and which he brought the sick lady. I had noticed them as we went by, and when I saw the way the lady looked when he gave them to her, I wished I had brought them instead of him. Some one intent on knowledge asked him how much he paid for them?

"He said, 'Paid for them! Nothing.'

"'Did you know them before?' he asked.

"'No sir.'

"A little while afterwards I saw him asleep in a seat, but when the train started he got up.

"The old captain by this time owned the car. He was not only an official, he was a host, and he did the honors as if he were in his own house and we were his guests; all was done so quietly and unobtrusively, too; he pulled up a blind here, and drew one down there, just a few inches, 'to give you a little more light on your book, sir;—to shut out a little of the glare, madam—reading on the cars is a little more trying to the eyes than one is apt to fancy.' He stopped to lean over and tell you that if you looked out of your window you would see what he thought one of the prettiest views in the world; or to mention the fact that on the right was one of the most celebrated old places in the State, a plantation which had once belonged to Colonel So-and-So, 'one of the most remarkable men of his day, sir.' His porter, Nicholas, was his admirable second; not a porter at all, but a body-servant; as different from the ordinary Pullman car-porter as light from darkness. In fact, it turned out that he had been an old servant of the Captain's. I happened to speak of him

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to the Captain, and he said: 'Yes, sir, he's a very good boy; I raised him, or rather, my father did; he comes of a good stock; plenty of sense and know their places. When I came on the road they gave me a mulatto fellow whom I couldn't stand, one of these young, new, "free-issue" some call them, sir, I believe; I couldn't stand him, I got rid of him.' I asked him what was the trouble. 'Oh! no trouble at all, sir, he just didn't know his place, and I taught him. He could read and write a little—a negro is very apt to think, sir, that if he can write he is educated—he could write, and thought he was educated; he chewed a toothpick and thought he was a gentleman. I soon taught him better. He was impertinent, and I put him off the train. After that I told them that I must have my own servant if I was to remain with them, and I got Nick. He is an excellent boy (he was about fifty-five). The black is a capital servant, sir, when he has sense, far better than the mulatto.' I became very intimate with the old fellow. You could not help it. He had a way about him that drew you out. I told him I was going to New Orleans to pay a visit to friends there. He said, 'Got a sweetheart there?' I told him, 'Yes.' He said he knew it as soon as I spoke to him on the platform. He asked me who she was, and I told him her name. He said to me, 'Ah! you lucky dog.' I told him I did not know that I was not most unlucky, for I had no reason to think she was going to marry me. He said, 'You tell her I say you'll be all right.' I felt better, especially when the old chap said, 'I'll tell her so myself.' He knew her. She always travelled with him when she came North, he said. I did not know at all that I was all right; in fact, I was rather low down just then about my chances, which was the only reason I was so anxious to go to New Orleans, and I wanted just that encouragement, and it helped me mightily. I began to think Christmas on the cars wasn't quite so bad, after all. He drew me on, and before I knew it I had told him all about myself. It was the queerest thing: I had no idea in the world of talking about my matters.—I had hardly ever spoken of her to a soul; but the old chap had a way of making you feel that he would be certain to understand you, and could help you. He told me about his own case, and it wasn't so different from mine. He lived in Virginia before the war; came from up near Lynchburgh somewhere; belonged to an old family there, and had been in love with his sweetheart for years, but could never make any impression on her. She was a beautiful girl, he said, and the greatest belle in the country round. Her father was one of the big lawyers there, and had a fine old place, and the stable was always full of horses of the young fellows who used to be coming to see her, and 'she used to make me sick, I tell you,' he said, 'I used to hate 'em all; I wasn't afraid of 'em; but I used to hate a man to look at her; it seemed so impudent in him; and I'd have been jealous if she had looked at the sun. Well, I didn't know what to do. I'd have been ready to fight 'em all for her, if that would have done any good, but it wouldn't; I didn't have any right to get mad with 'em for loving her, and if I had got into a row she'd have sent me off in a jiffy. But just then the war came on, and it was a Godsend to me. I went in first thing. I made up my mind to go in and fight like five thousand furies, and I thought maybe that would win her, and it did; it worked first-rate. I went in as a Sergeant, and I got a bullet through me in about six months, through my right lung, that laid me off for a year or so; then I went back and the boys made me a Lieutenant, and when the Captain was made a Major, I was made Captain. I was offered something higher once or twice, but I thought I'd rather stay with my company; I knew the boys, and they knew me, and we had got sort of used to each other—to depending on each other, as it were. The war fixed me all right, though. When I went home that first time my wife had come right around, and as soon as I was well enough we were married. I always said if I could find that Yankee that shot me I'd like to make him a present. I found out that the great trouble with me had been that I had not been bold enough; I used to let her go her own

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way too much, and seemed to be afraid of her. I *was* afraid of her, too. I bet that's your trouble, sir; are you afraid of her?' I told him I thought I was. 'Well, sir,' he said, 'it will never do; you mustn't let her think that—never. You cannot help being afraid of her, for every man is that; but it is fatal to let her know it. Stand up, sir, stand up for your rights. If you are bound to get down on your knees—and every man feels that he is—don't do it; get up and run out and roll in the dust outside somewhere where she can't see you. Why, sir,' he said, 'it doesn't do to even let her think she's having her own way; half the time she's only testing you, and she doesn't really want what she pretends to want. Of course, I'm speaking of before marriage; after marriage she always wants it, and she's going to have it, anyway, and the sooner you find that out and give in, the better. You must consider this, however, that her way after marriage is always laid down to her with reference to your good. She thinks about you a great deal more than you do about her, and she's always working out something that is for your advantage; she'll let you do some things as you wish, just to make you believe you are having your own way, but she's just been pretending to think otherwise, to make you feel good.'

"This sounded so much like sense that I asked him how much a man ought to stand from a woman. 'Stand, sir?' he said, 'Why, everything, everything, that does not take away his self-respect.' I said I believed if he'd let a woman do it she'd wipe her shoes on him. 'Why, of course she will,' he said, 'and why shouldn't she? A man is not good enough for a good woman to wipe her shoes on. But if she's the right sort of a woman she won't do it in company, and she won't let others do it at all; she'll keep you for her own wiping.'"

"There's a lot of sense in that, Lesponts," said one of his auditors, at which there was a universal smile of assent. Lesponts said he had found it out, and proceeded.

"Well, we got to a little town in Virginia, I forget the name of it, where we had to stop a short time. The Captain had told me that his home was not far from there, and his old company was raised around there. Quite a number of the old fellows lived about there yet, he said, and he saw some of them nearly every time he passed through, as they 'kept the run of him.' He did not know 'that he'd find any of them out to-day, as it was Christmas, and they would all be at home,' he said. As the train drew up I went out on the platform, however, and there was quite a crowd assembled. I was surprised to find it so quiet, for at other places through which we had passed they had been having high jinks; firing off crackers, and making things lively. Here the crowd seemed to be quiet and solemn; and I heard the Captain's name. Just then he came out on the platform, and someone called out: 'There he is, now!' and in a second such a cheer went up as you never heard. They crowded around the old fellow and shook hands with him and hugged him as if he had been a girl."

"I suppose you have reference to the time before you were married," interrupted someone, but Lesponts did not heed him. He went on:

"It seemed the rumor had got out that morning that it was the Captain's train that had gone off the track and that the Captain had been killed in the wreck, and this crowd had assembled to meet the body. 'We were going to give you a big funeral, Captain,' said one old fellow; they've got you while you are living, but we claim you when you are dead. We ain't going to let 'em have you then. We're going to put you to sleep in old Virginia.'

"The old fellow was much affected, and made them a little speech. He introduced us to them all. He said: 'Gentlemen, these are my boys, my neighbors and family;' and then, 'Boys,' these are my friends: I don't know all their names yet, but they are my friends.' And we were. He rushed off to send a telegram to his wife in New Orleans, because, as he said afterward, she might get hold, too, of the report that he had been killed; and a Christmas message would set her up, anyhow. She'd be a little low down

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at his not getting there, he said, as he had never missed a Christmas-day at home since '64.

"When dinner-time came he was invited in by pretty nearly every one in the car, but he declined; he said he had to attend to a matter. I was going in with a party, but I thought the old fellow would be lonely, so I waited and insisted on his dining with me. I found that it had occurred to him that a bowl of eggnogg would make it seem more like Christmas, and he had telegraphed ahead to a friend at a little place to have 'the materials' ready. Well, they were on hand when we got there, and we took them aboard, and the old fellow made one of the finest eggnoggs you ever tasted in your life. The rest of the passengers had no idea of what was going on, and, when the old chap came in with a big bowl, wreathed in holly, borne by Nick, and the old Captain marching behind, there was quite a cheer. It was offered to the ladies first, of course, and then the men assembled in the smoker and the Captain did the honors. He did them handsomely, too; made us one of the prettiest little speeches you ever heard; said that Christmas was not dependent on the fireplace, however much a roaring fire might contribute to it; that it was in every one's heart and might be enjoyed as well in a railway-car as in a hall, and that in this time of change and movement it behooved us all to try and keep up what was good and cheerful and bound us together, and to remember that Christmas was not only a time for merry-making, but was the time when the Saviour of the world came among men to bring peace and good-will, and that we should remember all our friends everywhere. 'And, gentlemen,' he said, 'there are two toasts I always like to propose at this time, and which I will ask you to drink. The first is to my wife.' It was drunk, you may believe. 'And the second is, my friends: all mankind.' This too, was drunk, and just then some one noticed that the old fellow had nothing but a little water in his glass. 'Why, Captain,' he said, 'you are not drinking! that is not fair.' 'Well, no, sir,' said the old fellow, 'I never drink anything on duty; you see it is one of the regulations and I subscribed them, and, of course, I could not break my word. Nick, there, will drink my share, however, when you are through; he isn't held up to quite such high accountability.' And sure enough, Nick drained off a glass and made a speech which got him a handful of quarters. Well, of course, the old Captain owned not only the car, but all in it by this time, and we spent one of the jolliest evenings you ever saw. The glum fellow who had insisted on his rights at Washington made a little speech, and paid the Captain one of the prettiest compliments I ever heard. He said he had discovered that the Captain had given him his own lower berth after he had been so rude to him, and that instead of taking his upper berth as he had supposed he would have done, he had given that to another person and had sat up himself all night. That was I. The old fellow had given the grumbler his lower in the smoking-room, and had given me his upper. The fellow made him a very handsome apology before us all, and the Captain had his own berth that night, you may believe.

"Well, we were all on the *qui vive* to see the Captain's wife when we got to New Orleans. The Captain had told us that she always came down to the station to meet him; so we were all on the look out for her. He told me the first thing that he did was to kiss her, and then he went and filed his reports, and then they went home together, 'and if you'll come and dine with me,' he said to me, 'I'll give you the best dinner you ever had—real old Virginia cooking; Nick's wife is our only servant, and she is an excellent cook.' I promised him to go one day, though I could not go the first day. Well, the meeting between the old fellow and his wife was worth the trip to New Orleans to see. I had formed a picture in my mind of a queenly looking woman, a Southern matron—you know how you do? And when we drew into the station I looked around for her. As I did not see her, I watched the Captain. He got off, and I missed him in the crowd. Presently, though, I saw him and I asked him, 'Captain, is she

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here?' 'Yes, sir, she is, she never misses; that's the sort of a wife to have, sir; come here and let me introduce you.' He pulled me up and introduced me to a sweet little old lady, in an old threadbare dress and wrap, and a little, faded bonnet, whom I had seen as we came up, watching eagerly for someone, but whom I had not thought of as being possibly the Captain's grand-dame. The Captain's manner, however, was beautiful. 'My dear, this is my friend, Mr. Lesponts, and he has promised to come and dine with us,' he said with the air of a lord, and then he leaned over and whispered something to her. 'Why, she's coming to dine with us to-day,' she said, with a very cheery laugh; and then she turned and gave me a look that swept me from top to toe, as if she were weighing me to see if I'd do. I seemed to pass, for she came forward and greeted me with a charming cordiality, and invited me to dine with them, saying that her husband had told her I knew Miss So-and-so, and she was coming that day, and if I had no other engagement they would be very glad if I would come that day, too. Then she turned to the Captain and said, 'I saved Christmas dinner for you, for when you didn't come I knew the calendar and all the rest of the world were wrong; so to-day is our Christmas.'

"Well, that's all," said Lesponts; "I did not mean to talk so much, but the old Captain is such a character, I wish you could know him. You'd better believe I went, and I never had a nicer time. They were just as poor as they could be, in one way, but in another they were rich. He had a sweet little home in their three rooms. I found that my friend always dined with them one day in the Christmas-week, and I happened to hit that day." He leaned back. "That was the beginning of my good fortune," he said, slowly, and then stopped. Most of the party knew Lesponts's charming wife, so no further explanation was needed. One of them said presently, however, "Lesponts, why didn't you fellows get him some better place?"

"He was offered a place," said Lesponts. "The fellow who had made the row about the lower berth turned out to be a great friend of the head of the Pullman Company, and he got him the offer of a place at three times the salary he got, but after consideration, he declined it. He would have had to come North, and he said that he could not do that: his wife's health was not very robust and he did not know how she could stand the cold climate; then, she had made her friends, and she was too old to try to make a new set; and finally, their little girl was buried there, and they did not want to leave her; so he declined. When she died, he said, or whichever one of them died first, the other would come back home to the old place in Virginia, and bring the other two with him, so they could all be at home together again. Meantime, they were very comfortable and well satisfied."

There was a pause after Lesponts ended, and then one of the fellows rang the bell and said, "Let's drink the old Captain's health," which was unanimously agreed to. Newton walked over to a table and wrote a note, and then slipped out of the club; and when next day I inquired after him of the boy at the door, he said he had left word to tell anyone who asked for him, that he would not be back till after Christmas; that he had gone home to Virginia. Several of the other fellows went off home too, myself among them, and I was glad I did, for I heard one of the men say he never knew the club so deserted as it was that Christmas-day.

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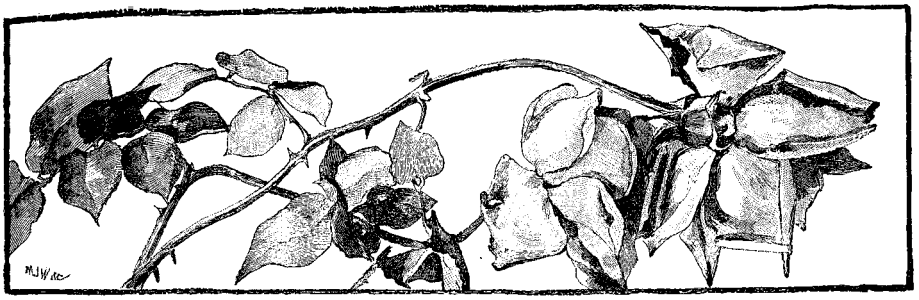

YESTERDAY'S FLOWERS.

By Richard Henry Stoddard.

YESTERDAY'S flowers am I,
And the last, sweet cups of dew
Which I drained (how fast!) are dry;
But others are draining too
Their cups as the hours go by,
And others soon will be;
For the girls who round my tomb
Will lament with dirges my doom
Will lament themselves in me;
Poor girls, I pity you!

Yesterday's flowers, which yet
Survive in me, make way
For those of to-morrow, as they
Will for those of other to-morrows;
We pay what the future borrows,
And the chiefest of our sorrows
Is—that we must pay!
So do not forget the debt,
You fair girl-flowers of to-day;
For whatever of gifts and of graces,
And of opulent promise lies
In the rose of youth on your faces,
And the light of love in your eyes—
Remember that you are clay,
Remember, and be not blind;
For wherever your footprints stray
Death follows—not far behind!
But Life (you say) is before,
Near at hand and is coming this way—
Dear Life, there is nothing to fear.
Nothing now, for now he is here,
And you, frail flowers of to-day,
Like yesterday's flowers, are no more!
Other forms and faces
Have taken—not filled your places—
They never will with me:
Their later beauty is less
Than your lost loveliness;
They see not the things I see,
They know not the things I know,
The things that they remember

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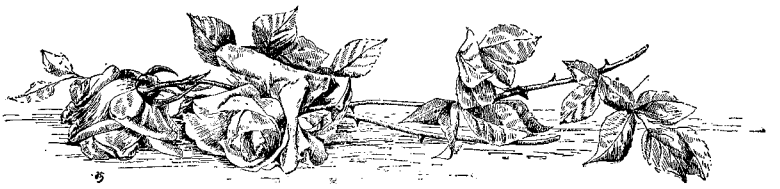
Are the things that I forget;
But it may not be always so—
There's a spark at the heart of the ember,
And the ashes are glowing yet.
It may be their souls may be stirred
By the scent of a flower, the song of a bird;
It may be when the sun has set,
Or the moon is on the sea,
That they will discover, and regret
What they have lost in me.
Let them sigh, if they must,
It is fitting and just
That dust should pay tribute to dust;
But I would not have them weep,
For little to me, in my last sleep,
Their too-late tears would be,
So profitless are the showers
That are shed for yesterday's flowers.

I would not, when I am dead,
Be in the minds of men,
Recorded by tongue or pen—
For words that I have said,
Or songs that I have sung,
Or what I was, old or young.
There are better things than these
To be known and remembered by,
And, common though they be,
I have loved them my whole life long;
They are more than life to me!
They thrill in the leaves of trees;
They throb in the nightingale's song,
They flash where the river flows;
They flame in the noonday sky;
They paint the wing of the butterfly;
They flush the heart of the rose.
If these, as they will, remain,
When I have passed away,
And speak to the world of me,
No matter what tales may be told
Of busy or idle hours,
Of pleasure, or of pain;
I shall not have lived in vain;
Already I live again!
I am not the man you see,
But another—young, not old;
Flower of the flowers of to-day,
Not yesterday's poor, dead flowers.



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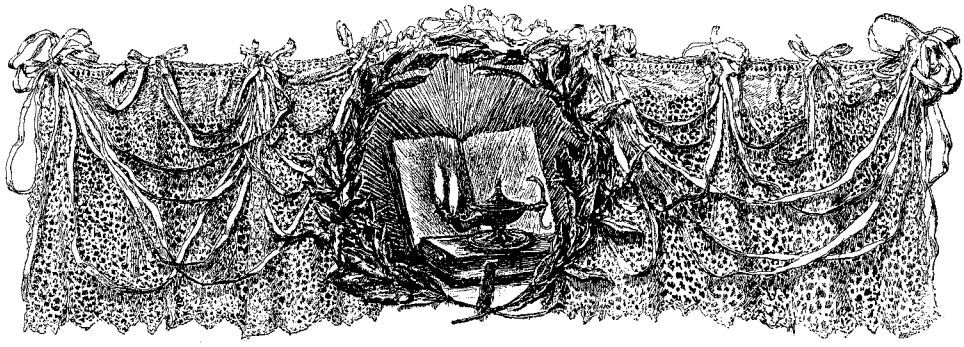

THE POINT OF VIEW

How intolerable in these hard times, when the poor are so much poorer than usual and the circumstances of many of the rich lack something of their customary ease, is the apparent obligation to spend in the habitual necessaries of life so much useful money that it would be pleasant to give away. It is the special season of gift-making, and what a season this particular Christmas is for advantageous giving! Heaven has prospered us tolerably, too, and there is some money coming in.

But dear! dear! how it all streams out again. How it goes! how it scatters! For the rent of this convenient flat where the elevator is so prompt and the prospect so fine; for the wages of servants and their maintenance; for hire of cabs; for schooling and proper clothes for the children; for subscriptions to clubs, and concerts, and dances, and church, and the charities on one's regular list; for a fair quality of abundant daily food, including occasional dinner-parties; for the new rug that was indispensable; for some modest additions to the winter wardrobes of the adult members of the family; for a sinking fund to meet the deficit left by our visit to the Fair. Eheu! alas! who shall deliver us from the accumulating body of this debt? What shall we do to be saved from the necessity of spending all that we can make and scrape in keeping the breath of work-a-day existence in our precious carcasses? We have spent so much that we have nothing left to give, and our prospective expenses are so threatening that we dare not borrow of the future.

The commonest lesson of this panicky year to Americans has been the lesson of thrift. All summer, and, more or less, ever since, it has been brought home to many of us that we must live simply if we hope to make our incomes support us. Now, as Christmas approaches, our attention is held down to the unwelcome supplementary truth that we must live more simply still if we are to have anything to give away.

I almost hope, for reasons which I confess are selfish, that no one will give me any Christmas present this year; yet there is no harm in saying that if anything is left in my stocking, I hope it will be a nice Chinaman, who can cook, and wash, and wait on the table, and answer the door-bell, and clean house, and sew, and drive a horse, and dress the children, and split his own kindlings, and live on a little occasional rice and very small wages. I should not require him to have very much style, for style is one of the most malignant enemies of frugality; but merely to be neat, diligent, abstemious, truthful, and able to get along with little sleep. Surely, with such a coadjutor, and with a corresponding alleviation of the domestic apparatus, one might hope to devise such stratagems of thrift, and to achieve such exploits of economy, as would make it possible to wrest increased dividends from existence.

For economy, in some measure, is not only the price of wealth, but the price of giving. If we eat our cake all up, of course we cannot have it; but that we might endure. But we cannot share it, either, and that is intolerable. What geese we are, what "blind mouths," if we sink all we can gather in the "comforts" in which

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we have imbedded ourselves, and deny ourselves the inestimable luxury of having something to spare. We all know better; I presume that we all keep up a constant struggle to do better; but all the allurements that make up the contemporary standard of living are in league against us to undermine our resolutions and bring our efforts to naught. We had yearnings enough after expensive things before we went to the Fair, and it is to be feared that since we got back from there we are more covetous of them than ever. Let us do something. Let us take a course of maxims from Poor Richard's Almanac; let us take our walks on the back streets where there are no shops; let us eschew bargains; let us discipline our appetites and thirsts; let us even go without many things that we really want and some that we really need. But not habitually without giving! No! Heaven forfend that we should be brought to that!

But we are not to be extravagant this year, even in our gifts. To give ourselves helpless is quite as bad as not to give. We are entitled to give only so much as our thrift and self-restraint have enabled us to spare. If that is nothing, then let us give nothing to anyone but ourselves, and to ourselves merely a salutary gift of discipline. If we have nothing to spare and give nothing, it will be a lesson to us. If we have nothing to spare and give just about as freely as ever, we shall miss our lesson, and very likely go on and be just as self-indulgent another year as we have been this last one. However impoverished we may be, we can afford to give ourselves this lesson in thrift, and if we take it kindly and with good nature, and lay it to heart, it may prove, as it should, the forerunner of a serene and amplified benevolence in years to come.

My cousin Antony was speaking not long since of the surprised respect he sometimes felt for himself because of certain things he had not said. He went a little into details, and I discovered that nearly all the unutterances that he prided himself upon were things that he had omitted to tell his wife. He felt, he said, that not to blurt out matters to the general public is no particular credit to a man, but the inducement to tell one's wife everything that would interest her is so strong that to have restrained one's-self from the abuse of such a privilege is fair ground for humble self-approbation. There are things that a conscientious man does not feel authorized to admit even to himself. A fact that is not admitted is more or less ineffectual. It may have a potentiality of mischief about it and still be harmless so long as it is ignored. To know something that it is disquieting to one's-self to know, and to let it die of neglect, is sane conduct; and so it is to know something that would worry one's wife and abstain from imparting it to her because it is wholly unnecessary for her to know it.

At least that was the view that my cousin Antony took. He maintained that to confide absolutely in one's wife was indeed good, but to temper candor on occasion with a wise and affectionate reticence was better still. He by no means advocated deceit or elaborate concealment. He hates a lie as much as anyone, and is as eager as Merlin himself to have vinegar burned when there is a liar to the windward. But mere abstention from inconsiderate admissions he admired even in himself. I think he is right. Confession may be good for the soul, but a Protestant who employs no professional confessor is bound to consider how his outpourings will affect the ear they enter. Let him steer them into an ear that they are sure to pass through, and not into one where they may stick and rankle.

Antony says that he never descants to his wife about any callow preliminary affair of the heart that he was ever involved in. She had shown, he said, a charitable willingness to hear and sympathize with his experiences of that sort; but though not to tell her involved the suppression of some of the most interesting tales he knew, some saving grace of marital circumspection had achieved the suppression. What biographical details of that sort came to her from other authorities than himself, gave him not the slightest concern. There was a wide distinction, according to his notion, between the information that she took the responsibility of acquiring and that which he took the responsibility of forcing upon her attention.

Another class of information that he systematically omits to share with her includes all gossip which comes to his ears that is derogatory to her own family. As he thinks it unwise to tell her things that might

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make her think less of him, so he omits information that might make her think less of herself. He told me a tale about his wife's uncle, Philip Hiram, that was really of the liveliest interest even to a stranger. But he said he had never told it to his wife, because it would mortify her to know it, and as no one but himself would dare tell her, the chances were that she would never hear it.

Antony does not think himself a sly dog for not telling everything to Mrs. Antony. To his mind his reticence shows, not his doubts of his wife's discretion or regard, but his sedulous regard for her happiness and the high value he places on her affection. Those are things of too much importance to put to hazard by impulsive revelations. He is really exceptionally frank in his ordinary communications, and to know anything that is worth telling and not to tell is a sort of self-sacrifice that no one who knows him would expect of him. Least of all did he expect it of himself. He simply found that there were a few things that he was periodically tempted to tell, and didn't tell, and was always surprised afterward that he hadn't.

In Mr. Howells's recent excellent and suggestive paper in this magazine on "The Man of Letters as a Man of Business," he said:

> *Under the régime of the great literary periodicals the* prosperity of literary men would be much greater than it actually is, if the magazines were altogether literary. But they are not. . . . Very probably this is because even the highest class of readers, who are the magazine readers, have small love of pure literature, which seems to have been growing less and less in all classes. I say *seems, because there are really no means of ascertaining* the fact, and it may be that the editors are mistaken in making their periodicals two-thirds popular science, politics, economics, and the timely topics which I will call contemporanics: I have sometimes thought they were. But however that may be, their efforts in this direction have narrowed the field of literary industry. . . . *They do not, altogether, want enough literature to justify* the best business talent in devoting itself to belles-lettres, to fiction or poetry or humorous sketches of travel, or light essays; business talent can do far better in dry-goods . . . real estate, railroads and the like.

Allowing for a large play of irony in this last sentence, Mr. Howells's main accusation is undoubtedly seriously made, and therefore seriously debatable. I suspect that he is mistaken as to the facts, and must think it provable by himself that he is wrong in the conclusion. That the magazines want all the pure literature they can get—such magazines and such pure literature as he is discussing, that is—is my sincere belief; and furthermore, to use an almost irresistible Hibernianism, that they can't get it. It is hard to imagine Mr. Howells thinking that enough pure literature, of the kind which he or even the less critical body of readers could enjoy or even tolerate, has ever been produced in any period or among any people to fill (let us say) four magazines, each publishing the equivalent of twelve ordinary volumes a year—all together at the rate of nearly a book a week. No demand for literature has ever produced such a condition of things; is it dangerous to say that no demand could produce it? By Mr. Howells's own hypothesis, that literature is always unworthy and commonly bad which is produced *primarily* to supply such a demand ("to aim a book at the public favor is the most hopeless of all endeavors, as it is one of the unworthiest"); and he would not really have us believe, in this decade most of all, that a smaller proportion of authors than before the advent of the magazines is honestly endeavoring, irrespective of any consciousness of a "demand" at all, to make "literature" from the pure spontaneous desire to write, from the love of fame, or from any of the old and universal motives? He himself is on record in many paragraphs of the Harper's "Study," to the effect that we are not only making this effort in great numbers, but (in the opinion of the kindest and most hopeful critic in American letters to-day) with an unusually large proportionate degree of success. Yet even thus, with the productiveness in quantity yielded him for the sake of argument, will he seriously say that he has seen, or sees any signs of, a supply of literature that would have enabled the magazines of the past five years to be "altogether literary," without complete degeneracy from the standards which he (and they, though he may not think it) would like to see preserved?

Earlier in the century, in the time of Blackwood and the quarterlies, before the *régime* of the great modern magazine as we understand it, it might have been expected that the case would be different — the need in quantity was far less and there were giants in those days; but was it dif-

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ferent? What proportion of politics and economics was there? Later the *Cornhill* and *Household Words* were full of "contemporanics." Later still, the *Atlantic Monthly* in its palmiest days, lonely as it was, abounded in them; and it certainly was never accused of discouraging pure literature, or of showing a wish to take its columns into any other field. May it not easily be that the supply of desirable purely literary product stands in much the same relation now as then to the space in the magazines? (I personally believe it is far *less* proportionately, though for reasons altogether independent of Mr. Howells's argument; but the milder form of the question is sufficient.) If this is actually the case the editors make no mistake in giving up their space to popular science, economics, and contemporanics, were there no other reason; all which things may be and are good and desired of men, whereas attempted literature is Dead Sea fruit. And if it be said that this argument implies that magazines are a necessity, to which some irreverent persons might make the answer of the French judge to the criminal who pleaded *il faut vivre*—it need only be replied that Mr. Howells himself virtually admits that they *are* a necessity, in present conditions, for the encouragement of literature, even if in his opinion they cannot give it all they should.

But how about their narrowing the field of literary industry? Does Mr. Howells know of any case of their declining an author's work solely because it was pure literature, or of any author who writes good pure literature who is shut out from them by reason of space, except for the cause that would still obtain if they were entirely literary—that no one man's work can be perpetually welcome in the same columns, or that no man's two works can be published in them side by side? There may be countless instances of editors' mistakes, and Vanity Fairs may have gone begging; but I doubt that it has ever been on the ground that the space was wanted for contemporanics. Every reader will wish that Mr. Howells might have produced more if he would; no sign has ever been seen among the most capricious public of tiring of his work; yet I cannot imagine that he was ever restricted by the belief that any editor would close his space to him and give it to popular science; nor can I think that he knows any brother author whose work has the same title to the name of literature whose production has been narrowed on like grounds.

Moreover, by the showing of his own paper, the magazines pay very well indeed for literature—better, in the long run, than ever before. Do they not pay far better than for all the other classes of matter that he mentions, and thus give the clearest evidence that pure literature, when they can get it, is more valuable to them than anything else? The gentlemen who have a hundred dollars a thousand words, the lady who has a hundred and fifty, never, I will wager, made these sums by writing popular science or economics. That the ability to make these earnings continuous does not exist, is shown by Mr. Howells in another part of this same paper to proceed from causes altogether independent of outside restriction; and I confess I do not understand how, putting all the parts together, he sustains his argument that the periodicals narrow a field that would otherwise be prosperous.

Mr. Howells's article contains passages of the most generous appreciation of the magazines and the heartiest acknowledgment of their value. His criticism is the criticism of a believer in them and their office, and a friend. It is almost unjust to call it a criticism at all. But in this point I believe their attitude is better than he supposes it. He feels keenly, one seems to read between the lines, the absence of any great and strong force tending toward a worthy creative literature—as it is perhaps not too much to say that we all feel it. The causes lie, I cannot but think, outside his present inquiry—perhaps in as large and intricate a phenomenon as the recurring cycles of different forms of intellectual activity, with the different problems to which they correspond; perhaps in a much simpler and less imposing explanation. If he said that the magazines must, for the present, do without the highest form of pure literature except in very moderate quantities, he would say what is true of them as of the whole time; but when he says they do not want it, I think he believes them less at one with him than they are.

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